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LA DIVINA COMMEDIA,

DI DANTE ALIGHIERI,

Done into English by

EDWARD C. LOWE, D.D.,

Canon of Ely.

Sappia ciascuno, che nulla cosa per legame musaico armonizzata si può della sua loquela in altra trasmutare, senza rompere tutta sua dolcezza e armonia.

Il Convito, Tratt: 1, Cap: vii.

LONDON

JAMES PARKER & Co., 31, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND.

ELY

G. H. TYNDALL, THE MINSTER PRESS.

A.D. 1904.

DEDICATION.

TO THE FRIENDS
WHO IN THE WINTER EVENINGS OF 1891-2-3,
UNDER THE PRESIDENCY
OF
ALWYNE, BISHOP OF ELY AND THE LADY ALWYNE COMPTON,
MET AT ELY,
IN THE HALL OF ALAN DE WALSINGHAM,
(DANTE'S CONTEMPORARY),
TO HELP ONE-ANOTHER
IN BETTER APPRECIATION OF
THE DIVINA COMMEDIA,
AND
TO A FULLER UNDERSTANDING
OF ITS MYSTERIES,
THIS ENGLISH VERSION IS SUBMITTED
BY THEIR "*Cheerful Companion*,"
AND AMANUENSIS,
E.C.L.

COLLEGE, ELY,

CHRISTMAS, 1902.

INFERNO.

INFERNO.

CANTO I.

*The Proem—The Lost Path—The Wrong Road—The
Safe Guide.*

NOW half way through the journey of our life,
In a dark wood I to myself came back ;
For lost had been the path of uprightness.
And ah ! as hard indeed it is to tell 4
How savage, rough and dense that forest was,
Whereof the very thought renews the dread,
So bitter 'tis, that death is hardly more ; 7
But to set forth the good that I found there,
I'll tell what other things I there beheld.
I cannot well recall how there I came, 10
So sunk was I in sleep the moment when
I at the first abandoned the true way ;
But when I'd reached the bottom of a hill, 13
• The point where to an end the valley came,
Which had with terror pierced me to the heart,
Upward I looked, and saw its shoulders now 16
Clothed with the garment of that planet's rays,
Which guides all others straight on every road.
Then was the fear a little quieted, 19

For this wild beast, which makes thee call for help, 94
 Ne'er lets another pass along her road,
 But meets him with such hindrance that he dies.
 Her nature so malignant is and curst, 97
 Her greedy lust is never satisfied,
 And when well fed she's hungrier than before.
 Many the animals with which she mates, 100
 And more they yet will be, until shall come
 The Greyhound, that will make her die in grief.
 He will not batten upon lands or pelf, 103
 But will on wisdom, love and virtue feed ;
 'Twixt the two Feltros will his people dwell.
 Salvation of that humbled Italy 106
 He'll be, for which the maid Camilla died,
 Turnus, Euryalus and Nisus bled :
 From every city will he hunt her forth, 109
 Until he shall have sent her back to hell,
 Whence Envy at the first did let her loose.
 Better for thee then, so I think and judge, 112
 To follow me, and I will be thy guide,
 And lead thee hence through an eternal place,
 Where thou wilt hear the wailing of despair, 115
 And see the ancient spirits in their pain,
 As each with shriek proclaims the second death.
 And next shalt thou behold those, who in fire 118
 Contented are, in hope to pass one day,
 Come when it may, unto the Blessed Ones ;
 To whom if after thou would fain ascend, 121
 A soul there'll be, worthier than I for that ;
 With her I'll leave thee when I go away ;
 For He, who reigns the King of Kings on high, 124
 Because I was rebellious 'gainst his laws,
 Wills not that I should to His city come.
 He governs everywhere, and there He reigns. 127
 There His own City, there His lofty Throne :
 Happy the man, elected there to dwell !"
 And I to him : " Poet I thee entreat 130

In name of Him thou knewest not as God,
That I may fly this and the worser ill,
Conduct me whither thou but now didst say, 133
That thus St. Peter's gate I may behold,
And those thou showest in such woeful case."
Then he moved on, and I behind him kept. 136

CANTO II.

Invocation of the Muses—Dante's Misgivings and their Relief—The Three Blessed Ladies—The Journey begins.

THE day was passing, and the darkling air
 All living things upon the earth relieved
 From their fatigues : and I the only one,
 Was getting ready to sustain the fight 4
 Both with the road, and with the pity too,
 As memory shall retrace, that erreth not.
 Ye Muses aid me, and high Genius now ; 7
 O Memory, that what I saw didst write,
 Here will be shown thine own nobility.
 "O Poet," I began, " who guidest me, 10
 Note well my natural force, if power it have,
 Ere thou commit me to this arduous path.
 Thou say'st that Silvius' father once went down 13
 In mortal flesh to the immortal world,
 And tarried there, his senses in full play.
 And if the Mighty Foe of all that's ill, 16
 To him was gracious, weighing the high effect,
 That should from him proceed, both who and what,
 To man intelligent 'twould seem but just ; 19
 For he of sacred Rome and her empire
 Was in the Empyrean chosen sire ;
 Which both alike, as I would speak the truth, 22
 Established were to be the holy place,
 Where sits the greater Peter's successor.
 Upon this journey, whence through thee he draws 25
 His boast, things did he learn which brought about
 His triumph and the Pope's investiture.
 Thither the Chosen Vessel later went 28
 To bring back confirmation of the Faith,
 Which is the first step on Salvation's way.

- But I—why go I there? or who permits? 31
 Æneas I am not, nor Paul am I;
 For this nor I, nor others deem me fit.
 Wherefore if I surrender now, and come, 34
 I fear the coming may my folly prove;
 Thou know'st, as sage, better than I can state."
 And as is one, who un-wills what he willed, 37
 And with new thoughts changeth a previous plan,
 So that from first inception he withdraws,
 Such on that dark hillside myself became; 40
 For while I thought, the fire of enterprize
 I quenched, which at the outset burned so quick.
 "If rightly I have understood thy words," 43
 Replied that shade of the Magnanimous,
 "Thy spirit is by cowardice assailed,
 Which oft times so embarrasseth a man, 46
 That from an honourable aim he swerves,
 As through deceptive sight his horse will shy.
 But that thou mayst relieve thee of this fear, 49
 I'll tell thee why I came and what I heard,
 What time my pity was first stirred for thee.
 I was 'mong those, who live in long suspense; 52
 And me a Lady called, saintly as fair,
 Such that I prayed her tell me her behests.
 Her eyes did glisten brighter than the star: 55
 Sweetly and softly she began in voice
 Angelical to tell her tale to me.
 "Hail courteous soul! O son of Mantua, hail! 58
 Whose fame endures in honour in the world,
 And will endure long as the world runs on,
 One who, if not good fortune's friend, is mine, 61
 Upon the lonely hill is on his way
 Obstructed so, that terror turns him back;
 And he I fear already is so lost, 64
 That all too late I rose to succour him,
 By what concerning him in heav'n I've heard.
 Bestir thee then, and with thine ornate speech, 67

And all that is required to rescue him,
 Assist him so that I may be consoled.
 I, who would have thee go, am Beatrice : 70
 From whence I came there would I fain return :
 Love moved me first, and prompts me now to speak.
 When in the presence of my Lord I stand, 73
 Thee will I name in oft repeated praise."
 She then was silent and I next began :
 "Lady, whose virtue by itself alone 76
 Exalts mankind 'bove all the heaven contains,
 Which in the narrowest orbit circles round,
 To me so grateful is this charge of thine, 79
 That had I now obey'd, I'd been too slow ;
 No farther need thy wishes to disclose.
 But tell me why thou dost not hesitate 82
 To come down here into this central pit,
 From those broad realms for which thine ardour burns."
 "Since 'tis thy wish inly to learn so much, 85
 I'll briefly tell thee," she replied to me,
 "Why I am not afraid to enter here.
 Of those things only should we be afraid, 88
 That have a power to do another ill,
 Not of aught else ; elsewhere is naught to fear.
 I am made such by God, thanks be to Him, 91
 That your calamities affect not me,
 Nor flames of yonder burning me assail.
 In Heaven a noble Lady is, who grieves 94
 For this obstruction that I send thee to,
 So that on High stern judgment breaketh down.
 Lucia she besought, and in request 97
 Spake thus : "Of thee thy faithful votary now
 Hath need, and unto thee I him commend."
 Lucia, foe of all that cruel is, 100
 Sped off, and to the place she came, where I
 Was seated by the Rachel of old days.
 "O Beatrice, true praise of God," she said, 103
 "Why go not to his aid, who loved thee so,

That for thy sake he left the vulgar herd ?
 Hearest thou not the anguish of his cry, 106
 Nor seest him fighting hard with death upon
 The flood, o'er which can ocean never boast ?"
 Ne'er in the world were people found so keen. 109
 To make a profit or escape a loss.
 As I upon the utt'rance of such words.
 Hither I came, down from my seat in bliss, 112
 Confiding in thy stately eloquence,
 Which honours thee, and those who it have heard."
 And after she had pleaded with me thus, 115
 She turned her eyes away, bright e'en in tears,
 Whereby she made me readier yet to start.
 And thus I came to thee, as she would have ; 118
 I've borne thee from the presence of that beast,
 Which to the fair hill barr'd the shorter way.
 What is it then ? why halting thus, O why ? 121
 Why in thy heart allow such cowardice ?
 This lack of courage and of venture, why ?
 When three such ladies from among the blest 124
 In heaven's own court on thee bestow their care,
 And my word voucheth thee so great a boon ?"
 As little flowerets, nipped by frosts of night, 127
 Droop and close up, but in the clear sunshine
 Stand up erect and open on their stems,
 Such I became from my faintheartedness ; 130
 And courage such coursed up within my breast,
 That I, as one enfranchisèd, began :
 "O full of pity she, who succoured me ; 133
 And courteous thou in prompt obedience
 To the true words that she addressed to thee !
 Thou hast inspired my heart with such desire 136
 To go with thee by force of thine appeal,
 That to my first resolve am I returned.
 On then : for one sole will impels us both ; 139
 Thou art my guide, my lord, my master, thou."
 Such were my words to him, and as he moved,
 I entered on the deep and savage road. 142

CANTO III.

The Gate of Hell—The Vestibule—Passage of Acheron.

“**T**HROUGH me the way to City Dolorous,
 Through me the way into eternal pain,
 Through me the way amid the people lost.
 Justice impelled my Maker in the height, 4
 Omnipotence Divine created me,
 The Highest Wisdom and Primeval Love.
 Before me were there no created things, 7
 Eternal all, and I eternal am.
 All hope abandon, ye who enter here !”
 These words in letters of a murky hue 10
 I saw inscribed on lintel of a gate ;
 Whereon I said : “ Master, their sense is hard.”
 And he to me, as quick to apprehend : 13
 “ All hesitation here must be dismissed ;
 All cowardice must here die utterly.
 We to the place are come, where I have said 16
 That in their suffering thou wilt see the race,
 Who’ve lost the boon of their intelligence.”
 And after he had placed his hand in mine 19
 With cheering look, wherein I comfort found,
 He set me in among the secret things.
 Here sighs and lamentations, and deep groans 22
 Resounded through the starless atmosphere,
 Whereat myself at first was moved to tears.
 Confused tongues, and horrid utt’rances, 25
 Words full of woe, and accents of wild rage,
 Shrill cries and hoarse, and sound withal of blows
 Made up a tumult, that for aye whirls round 28
 Through that dark air beyond the guage of time,
 As rolls the sand before the whirlwind’s blast.
 And I who felt my head with horror girt, 31

Said : " O my Master, what is this I hear ?
 What people is't that seems thus crushed in woe ?"

And he to me : " This miserable state 34
 The melancholy souls of those endure,
 Who lived without disgrace or praise.

Mingled are they with all that caitiff band 37
 Of angels, who not rebels, yet were not
 Faithful to God, caring alone for self.

Hunted from heaven, lest heaven should be less fair, 40
 The depth of hell receives them not, because
 From them the guilty might some glory gain."

And I : " Master, what then so weighs on these, 43
 That it should wring from them these loud laments ?"

He answered me : " Thee will I briefly tell ;
 These spirits have not any hope of death, 46
 And their blind life so abject seems to them,
 That envious are they of all other lot.

The world allows no fame of them in it ; 49
 Mercy and Justice hold them in disdain :
 Of them we speak no more ; look and pass on."

And I, observant, an ensign beheld, 52
 Which, as it whirled around, ran on so fast,
 It seemed to me disdainful of repose.

And after it there came so long a trail 55
 Of people, that I should not have believed
 That death had e'er such multitudes undone.

And when among them some I recognized, 58
 I saw, and knew again the ghost of him,
 Whose coward heart the grand refusal made.

At once I understood, and was assured, 61
 That this the party was of those caitiffs,
 Hateful alike to God and to His foes.

These wretches, who had never lived a life, 64
 All naked were, and goaded terribly
 By wasps and monstrous flies, that there are found.

These caused their faces to run down in blood, 67
 Which, mingled with their tears about the feet,

Was gathered up by worms of loathsome kind.
 And when I turned the distance to survey, 70
 People I saw on a great river's bank ;
 Wherefore I said : " O Master, grant me now
 To know who these are, and the rule that makes 73
 Them seem so eager to be put across,
 As I perceive them in this dusky light."
 And he to me : " Plainer will these things be, 76
 When presently our steps we stay upon
 The melancholy shore of Acheron."
 Then with mine eyes bow'd in confusion low, 79
 Fearing my words to him were troublesome,
 Far as the river I refrained from speech ;
 And lo ! towards us in a boat there came 82
 An old man hoary with the locks of eld,
 Shouting : " A curse upon ye, wicked souls ;
 Ne'er hope to look again upon the sky ; 85
 I come to take you to the other side,
 To everlasting night in fire and ice.
 And thou, who standest there, a living soul, 88
 Get thee away from these, for they are dead."
 But when he saw that I departed not,
 " Another way," said he ; " From other ports 91
 Thou'lt reach the shore ; not here for thee to cross.
 'Tis meet a lighter craft should carry thee."
 To him my Guide : " Vex not thyself, Charon ; 94
 Thus yonder is it willed, where Power avails
 For what it wills ; and so enquire no more."
 Quiet thereafter were the shaggy jaws 97
 Of the old pilot on the livid pool,
 Who round about his eyes showed wheels of fire.
 But the souls there, which tired and naked stood, 100
 Changed colour then, and chattered with their teeth,
 At the first hearing of his cruel words.
 God they blasphemed, and their own fathers cursed, 103
 The human race, the place, the hour, the seed
 Of their begetting, and their day of birth.

Then one and all together they repaired 106
 With piercing shrieks unto the accursed shore,
 Which waits for every man that fears not God.
 Charon, with demon eyes, that blazed like brands, 109
 Gives forth his signal and collects them all.
 Who-ever lingers, with his oar he smites :
 As when in autumn time the leaves drop off, 112
 One thick upon another, till the bough
 Sees its full tale of spoil upon the ground,
 After like fashion, Adam's evil seed, 115
 One after other, cast them from the shore,
 Each at his signal, as the bird at call.
 So all go off across the darkling wave ; 118
 And ere they've landed on the other shore,
 Another throng assembles upon this.
 " My son," said then the Master courteous, 121
 " All they who die under the wrath of God,
 From every land must all assemble here ;
 And eager are they to cross o'er the stream ; 124
 For Divine Justice doth so spur them on,
 That fear with them is turned into desire.
 This way ne'er passeth any good man's soul ; 127
 And so, if Charon chafe about thee now,
 What his words mean, thou well canst understand."
 As ended thus his words, the dusky plain 130
 Trembled so fiercely, that its terrors still
 In memory bathe me in a stream of sweat :
 The land of tears exhaled a blast of wind, 133
 Through which a vermil light like lightning flashed,
 That all sensation overcame in me :
 To Earth I fell, as one surprised by sleep. 136

CANTO IV.

*First Circle—Limbo.**Innocents—Patriarchs—Illustrious Men.*

THE heavy slumber of my brain was broke
 By a deep thunder crash ; upstarted I,
 As one who is with violence awoke :
 I turned mine eyes, now rested, round the scene, 4
 Standing erect ; and careful survey made
 To learn what place it was that I had reached.
 In truth I found myself upon the brink 7
 Of the sad vale, in whose abyss collects
 The thunder roar of wailing infinite.
 Obscure it was, profound and thick with cloud, 10
 Such that with straining gaze adown its depth
 No form could I discern of anything.
 “ Descend we now to the blind world below,” 13
 Began the Poet, pale himself as death.
 “ I will go first, and second thou shalt be.”
 Quick to observe his colour change, I said : 16
 “ How shall I come if thou be terrified,
 My wonted comfort in my every doubt ? ”
 And he to me : “ It is the agony 19
 Of those below, that on my face depicts
 The pity, which thou takest to be fear.
 Let us proceed ; the length of way constrains.” 22
 Thus passed he in, and made me enter thus
 The circle which first girds th’ abyss around.
 And here, so far at least as reached the ear, 25
 There was no plaint, only the sound of sighs,
 That caused a tremor through the eternal air ;
 And this from sadness without torment came, 28
 That filled the many throngs that crowded there

Of children, and of women, and of men.
 Said the kind Master : " Dost thou not enquire 31
 What spirits these are, that thou seest here?
 Now would I have thee know, ere thou proceed,
 These sinned not, and if they some merits have, 34
 'Tis not enough ; for Baptism they lacked,
 Which of the Creed thou holdest is the gate.
 And if before the Christian Faith they lived, 37
 They did not with due worship honour God ;
 And of these last myself am such an one.
 For such defects, and not for other guilt, 40
 Have we been lost ; only so far chastised,
 That without hope we live in fond desire."
 Great grief seized me at heart, when this I learned, 43
 Seeing that persons of high worth, whom I
 Did know, were in that Limbo in suspense.
 " Tell me, O Master mine, tell me, my Lord : " 46
 Thus I began in wish to be assured
 About that Faith, which conquers all untruth ;
 " Did ever any by his own desert, 49
 Or others', hence go forth and join the Blest ? "
 And he, who understood my covert speech,
 Replied : " I was but new in this estate, 52
 When I saw come to us a Mighty One,
 Who with the sign of victory was crowned.
 The shade of the first parent He withdrew, 55
 And his son Abel's, that of Noah too,
 With Moses too, Lawgiver, ever meek ;
 Abram the Patriarch, David the King, 58
 Israel with his father and his sons,
 And Rachel, for whose sake he toiled so long ;
 With many more, and made them blessed Saints : 61
 And I would have thee know, that afore these
 No human spirits were there that were saved."
 We slackened not our pace, the while he spake, 64
 But ever through the forest made our way,
 Forest, I mean, of spirits crowded thick.

As yet we had not far advanced from where 67
 I dropped asleep, when I observed a fire,
 Which overspread a hemisphere of gloom.
 A little distant from it were we still, 70
 But not so far I could not partly see
 That honourable persons held the spot :
 " O Thou who honour bring'st to every art 73
 And science, say who these are, that enjoy
 An honour such as parts them from the rest."
 And he to me : " The honour of renown, 76
 That echoes of them in thy life above,
 With heaven wins favour that promotes them thus."
 In the meantime by me a voice was heard ; 79
 " Due honour to our chiefest poet give ;
 His shade comes back, that from us went away."
 After the voice had ceased and all was still, 82
 I saw four stately shades toward us approach ;
 In semblance neither glad nor sorrowful.
 The gracious Master then began to say : 85
 " Him well observe, who bears that sword in hand,
 And as their sire, precedes the other three.
 Homer is he, of poets sovran Lord ; 88
 Horace, the Satirist, as second comes ;
 The third is Ovid, Lucau is the last.
 Because with me all of them rightly share 91
 The name that with one voice they all proclaimed,
 They do me honour, and therein do well."
 Assembled thus I saw the glorious school 94
 Of that great lord of most exalted song,
 Who as an eagle soars above the rest.
 When they together briefly had conferred, 97
 They turned to me and signs of welcome gave,
 And my good Master kindly smiled thereat.
 And greater honour still they paid to me, 100
 For of their company they made me one,
 And I was reckoned 'mid such wisdom sixth.
 So walked we on as far as to the light, 103

- Talking of things which silence here befits,
 As where we were, it seemly was to treat.
- Under a stately castle we arrived, 106
 Compassed by sevenfold girth of lofty walls,
 Which a fair streamlet guarded all around.
- O'er this we went, as it had been dry land ; 109
 Through sevenfold gates I with those sages passed ;
 We reached a meadow of the freshest green.
- Persons were there, whose grave eyes slowly moved ; 112
 Their mien was that of high authority :
 Seldom they spoke, and then with gentle voice.
- Forth from one side we then withdrew ourselves 115
 Toward a wide space, raised up and full of light,
 So that the whole assembly was in view.
- There straight before me on the enamelled green 118
 To me were shewn the mighty spirits, whom
 Once to have seen exalts me in myself.
- I saw Electra and her many friends, 121
 And 'mong them Hector and Æneas knew,
 And hawk-eyed Cæsar in full armour clad ;
- On th' other side I saw Camilla and 124
 Penthesilea, and Latinus, King,
 Sitting beside his child, Lavinia.
- I saw that Brutus, who drove Tarquin out, 127
 Cornelia, Julia, Marcia and Lucrece ;
 And by himself the Saladin apart.
- Then, as I raised my brows a little more, 130
 I saw the Master of all them that "know,"
 Seated amid the philosophic clan.
- On him all gaze : honour all pay to him. 133
 There Socrates I saw and Plato, who,
 Before the others, nearest stand to him.
- Democritus, who says chance made the world, 136
 The Cynic, Thales, Anaxagoras,
 Zeno, Empedocles and Heraclite ;
- The good collector of the Qualities, 139
 Named Dioscorides ; Orpheus I saw,

Tully and Linus, moral Seneca, Euclid, geometer ; and Ptolemy, Galen, Hippocrates and Avicen ;	142
✓ Averrhoes, who the great comment made. I cannot write the catalogue of all, In that my lengthy theme so hunts me down, That short of fact my record oft must fall.	145
The company of six grows less by two : The guiding Sage leads me, another way, Forth from that calm back to the trembling air ; And to a part I come, where no light shines.	148
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CANTO V.

*Second Circle—The Wanton.**Minos—Carnal Sinners—Francesca da Rimini.*

FROM the first circle thus I lower went
 Down to the second of a narrower girth,
 But so much greater pain as goads to shrieks.
 There Minos stands and horribly he grins: 4
 He sifts all sins at entrance, judgment gives,
 And sentences by coils around him wound.
 I mean that when the soul of evil birth 7
 Before him comes, a full confession's made;
 And shrewdly knowing all the sins of men,
 He notes what place in hell is its desert, 10
 And girds him with his tail as many times
 As mark the grade to which he wills it sent.
 Before him numbers stand continuously; 13
 For judgment in its turn each soul comes up;
 They tell, they hear, and down are hurled below.
 "O thou, who comest to this grim hospice," 16
 Said Minos, as he caught the sight of me,
 Suspending his high office for the nonce,
 "Beware how here thou enter; whom thou trust: 19
 Let not this spacious entrance play thee false."
 My Guide replied: "From thee, too, why this cry?
 His visit hinder not, ordained by fate: 22
 So yonder is it willed, where power avails
 For all that's willed; no further question then."
 Already sounds of agony begin 25
 To break upon mine ear; anon I reach
 A place where great lamenting thrills me through.
 I came unto a spot devoid of light, 28
 Which bellows like a tempest-stricken sea,
 When by conflicting winds it is assailed.
 This hurricane of hell, which never rests, 31

Carries along the spirits in its sweep,
 Whirling and smiting, as it harries them.
 But when they come to face the shattered cliff, 34
 Then shrieks break forth, and howls and great laments ;
 The mighty power of God they there blaspheme.
 To torment thus contrived I understood 37
 That for their carnal sins are men condemned,
 Who subject reason to the appetite.
 And as the wings of starlings bear them off, 40
 'Mid winter's cold, in flocks widespread and dense,
 So with those evil spirits doth that blast.
 This way and that it drives them up and down ; 43
 Hope with its comfort never visits them,
 Not of repose, but of diminished pain.
 And as the cranes move on with dirge-like chant, 46
 Forming in th' air a long protracted line,
 So in a trail of woe I saw approach
 Ghosts driven onward in that raging storm ; 49
 Whereon I asked : " Master, what souls are these.
 That here the blackened air chastiseth thus ? "
 " The first of these, particulars of whom 52
 Thou fain wouldst learn," said he thereon to me,
 " An Empress was of many languages ;
 Corrupted so in sensuality, 55
 That by her edict lust was made the law,
 Thus to escape the blast of her disgrace.
 Semiramis is she, who as we read, 58
 Was wife of Ninus, and his successor ;
 She held the land that now the Soldan rules.
 The next is she who slew herself for love, 61
 And to Sichæus' ashes broke her faith ;
 The wanton Cleopatra follows her.
 See Helen, for whose sake so long a time 64
 Of strife rolled on ; the great Achilles too,
 Who to the end was fighting still for love.
 See Paris, Tristan,"—and a thousand more 67
 He with his finger marked, and named their names,

Whom love had parted from this life of ours.
 And as I heard my Teacher close the roll 70
 Of knights and ladies of the olden time,
 Such pity rose, that I was well nigh lost.
 "Poet," I next began, "gladly would I 73
 Address the pair who hand in hand approach.
 And seem to float so lightly on the wind."
 And he to me: "Thou'lt see, when they shall draw 76
 Nearer to us; and then conjure them by
 The love which leads them on, and they will come."
 Soon as the wind inclined their course to us, 79
 I raised my voice: "O ye exhausted souls,
 Come speak with us, if Other say not nay."
 As doves at prompting of a soft desire, 82
 Steady on open wing to their sweet nest
 Speed through the air, by their own instinct borne;
 So from the group, where Dido is, did these 85
 Hasten toward us through the malignant air;
 So mighty with them was the kindly call.
 "O living soul, benign and full of grace, 88
 Who in thy passage through the empurpled air
 Dost visit us, who stained the earth with blood,
 Were but the Sovran of the universe 91
 Our Friend, Him would we pray to grant thee peace,
 Since thou hast pity for our perverse fate.
 What thou would'st learn, and what thou fain would'st say, 94
 This will we hear, and that will tell to thee,
 So long as now, the wind is hush'd awhile.
 The land where I was born, is situate 97
 Upon the sea shore where the Po comes down
 With all his affluents to rest in peace.
 Love, ever quick to seize a gentle heart, 100
 Him by my side possessed for the fair form,
 That they tore from me, and the mode still galls;
 Love, that from love excuseth none beloved, 103
 Possessed me in his charm with such delight
 That as thou seest, he leaves me not e'en here.

- Love led us both unto a common death ; 106
 Caïna waits the man who quenched our life.”
 Such were the words borne from them unto us.
 Soon as I'd learned who were those stricken souls, 109
 I bowed my head, and so long held it down,
 The poet said at last : “ What is thy thought ? ”
 And as I answered, I began : “ Alas ! Alas ! 112
 What thoughts of sweetness, and what fond desire,
 Must to this dolorous pass have led them on ! ”
 Again I turned to them, and as I spake, 115
 Began : “ Francesca, this thy punishment
 Makes me weep tears of pity and distress ;
 But tell me ; in the hour of those sweet sighs, 118
 How and by what did Love grant you to know
 The purport of desires not yet declared.”
 And she to me : “ No pain more bitter is 121
 Than to remember hours of happiness
 In time of mis'ry, as your teacher knows.]
 But if to learn from its first root the growth 124
 Of this our love, thou have so great a wish,
 Like one who weeps and speaks, I'll tell it thee.
 One day for pastime we together read 127
 Of Lancelot, how by love he was enthralled.
 We were alone without distrust of aught.
 The reading oft times caused us to exchange 130
 Glances that brought a flush upon the cheek ;
 But one point only vanquished us at last.
 When we read how the lady's longed-for smile 133
 By such a lover was with passion kissed,
 He who from me shall ne'er be separate,
 Trembling the while, pressed on my lips a kiss. 136
 The book and writer were our Galahad.
 That day did we no further read in it.”
 The while one spirit thus her story told, 139
 The other sobbed aloud, so that in sympathy]
 I swooned away, as if about to die ;
 And down I fell, as a dead body falls. 142

CANTO VI.

*Third Circle—The Gluttonous.**Cerberus—Ciaccio and his Prophecy.*

RETURNING to my senses, which had closed
 Before the anguish of the kinsfolk twain,
 So that with sadness I was wholly stunned,
 I see new tortures, and new tortured souls 4
 Around me on all sides, move where I may,
 Or turn, or wheresoe'r I set my eyes.
 In the third circle am I, in a rain 7
 Eternal, cursèd, drenching, icy cold,
 Its rule ne'er broken, quality ne'er changed.
 Foul water, huge hailstones, and flakes of snow 10
 Pour down in torrents through the darkened air ;
 And the earth stinks, that sucks this deluge in.
 There Cerberus, a fierce and uncouth beast, 13
 With triple gullet, doglike barks and bays
 Over the people, lying there submerged.
 Eyes vermil red, a greasy beard he hath 16
 And black, with belly huge and hookéd paws.
 He claws the spirits, flays and quarters them.
 In such a downpour they too howl like dogs : 19
 Screen for one side they of the other make,
 And oft the godless wretches change about.
 When Cerberus, the monster worm, saw us, 22
 He opened wide his mouths, and showed their fangs,
 While not a limb of him could he keep still.
 My leader spread the span of his two hands, 25
 Caught up the earth, and from his well filled fists
 Flung it right down into the ravening throats.
 As hungry dog, that barking craves his food, 28

Grows quiet as he gnaws the bone, whereon
 Intent he strains and fights alone with it,
 Such did the foul and slobbering jaws become 31
 Of demon Cerberus, whose thundering roar
 So stuns the souls, that fain would they be deaf.
 Over the ghosts we passed, whom the fierce rain 34
 Beats to the ground, and set our feet upon
 Their emptiness, which bore the form of men.
 They all were lying stretched upon the ground, 37
 Save one, which to a sitting posture rose
 Quick, as he saw us pass in front of him.
 "O thou," he said, "Who through this hell art led, 40
 Own my acquaintance, if thou know me still.
 Or ever I was unmade, thou wast made."
 And I to him: "This agony of thine 43
 Takes thee perchance beyond my memory's range,
 So that meseems, I ne'er saw thee before;
 But tell me who thou art, that to a place 46
 Thus sad art sent, and to such punishment,
 That e'en a greater not so noisome were."
 And he to me: "Thy city which is full 49
 Of envy, like an overrunning sack,
 Held me within it in the life serene.
 Ciaccio did you citizens call me: 52
 For sin of gluttony most ruinous
 Beneath this rain, as thou dost see, I pine;
 Nor in this sorrow is my soul alone, 55
 For these all lie under like penalty
 For the like sin." No other word he spake.
 "Ciaccio," I replied, "Thy grievous state 58
 So weighs on me, that it invites to tears.
 But tell me, if thou know, to what will come
 The citizens of city thus distraught? 61
 Is there a just man left? tell me the cause
 Of discord such as hath assailed her."
 And he: "After the tension of long strife 64
 They'll come to bloodshed; and the woodsmen then

- Will hunt the others forth with great outrage.
 Then soon, within three suns, must these again 67
 Fall to the ground, their rivals be supreme,
 By force of one who in the offing tacks.
 Long time will they hold up their heads on high, 70
 Keeping the others under heavy weights,
 Howe'er they smart thereat, and inly chafe.
 Two righteous men there are, unheeded there : 73
 Pride, envy, avarice the three sparks are,
 That set afire the hearts of all the rest."
 Here ended he his melancholy dirge. 76
 And I to him : "I would thou teach me more,
 And further parley grant. Tegghiaio say,
 And Farinata, worthies both, Mosca, 79
 Iacopo Rusticucci, Arrigo,
 And others who applied their minds to good,
 Say where they are, and tell me about them, 82
 For strong desire constraineth me to learn
 Is heaven's own sweetness, or hell's poison theirs."
 And he : "They are among the blackest souls : 85
 Another crime sinks them to lower depths ;
 If thou descend so far thou'lt see them there.
 But when in the sweet world thou art once more, 88
 To men's remembrance call me back I pray.
 I tell no more, nor more do I reply."
 From look direct he rolled his eyes askance ; 91
 A moment's glance, and then he bowed his head,
 And with it fell among the other blind.
 My Leader said : "He riseth not again 94
 On this side of the Angel's trumpet call,
 When Sovran Justice as a foe will come,
 And each find then his own sad tomb again ; 97
 Again resume his flesh and form, and hear
 The doom that echoes through eternity."
 So passèd we on with tardy step across 100
 The noisome medley of the ghosts and rain,
 Touching a little on the future life ;

- Whereof I asked : " Master, will punishments 103
After the great Doom's day for them increase,
Or become less, or will they burn as now?"
- And he to me : " Back to thy science go, 106
Which rules that as a thing more perfect is,
Greater with it the sense of joy or pain.
- And now although these folk, for ever cursed, 109
To true perfection never can arrive,
Nearer than here they then expect to be."
- Onward we wound about that circling road, 112
Speaking much more than I do now repeat :
We reached the point where the descent begins :
Here found we Plutus, the arch-enemy. 115

CANTO VII.

Fourth Circle—The Covetous and the Prodigal.

Plutus—The Penalty of the Miserly and the Prodigal—Fortune.

Fifth Circle—The Wrathful.

“*DAPÈ Satan, papè Satan aleppe,*”

Plutus with hoarse and clucking voice began ;
 Whereon that courteous Sage, who all things knew,
 Said to encourage me : “ Let not thy fear 4
 At all disturb thee, for whate’er his power,
 He shall not bar thy way adown this rock.”
 He turned him then to that inflated face, 7
 And said : “ Be silent, thou accursèd wolf ;
 In thine own vitals burn thy fury up :
 Not without cause this journey to the deep : 10
 Such is the Will on high, where Michael took
 Due vengeance on the proud adultery.”
 As sails of vessel, bellying in the wind, 13
 Fall down in tangled heaps, when snaps the mast,
 So fell the savage monster to the ground.
 Thus to the fourth pit went we down, our steps 16
 Gaining the more upon the doleful bank,
 That shuts in all the sin of all the world.
 Justice of God ! Who is’t that piles up toil 19
 So strange, and torments such as I beheld ?
 Why doth our sin such havock make of us ?
 As yonder ’bove Charybdis rolls the surge, 22
 That breaks on that which ’gainst it dashes in,
 So here must folk keep up their counter dance.
 Here more than any elsewhere saw I crowds, 25
 From one side and the other, with loud yells,
 Roll heavy weights by strain of chest alone :

With wild encounter dashed they in, and then 28
 Each group turned backward, rolling to the rear
 With cries, "Why hoarding," and "whysquand'ringye?"
 So kept they turning in the dismal round 31
 On either hand to the point opposite,
 With still the cry of their reproachful gibe.
 And then as to the circle's half-way point 34
 They came, each for another joust wheeled round.
 And I with heart in pity well nigh rent,
 Said ; " Master, show me now what people here 37
 These be, and say if clergy all of these,
 Who on our left appear with shaven crowns,"
 And he to me : " All these in their first life . 40
 Were in their mental vision so squint-eyed,
 In spending they no just proportion kept.
 Clearly enough their snarling cry says this, 43
 When at the two points of their round they meet,
 Where the offence contrariant parts them off.
 Those, who no covering have of hair on head, 46
 Where clerics, popes and cardinals alike,
 'Mong whom works avarice its worst excess."
 And I : " Master, among such forms as these, 49
 Some ought I well myself to recognize,
 Who were polluted by this kind of sin."
 And he to me : " A vain conclusion thine ; 52
 Th' ignoble life, that once befoulèd them,
 Past recognition leaves them in the dark.
 Ever in mutual buffets will they meet ; 55
 Forth from the sepulchre will these rise up
 With closèd fist, and those with hair cropped short.
 Ill giving and ill saving have from them 58
 Ta'en the fair world, and fixed them in this fray :
 And what this is I need not dress with words.
 Now can'st thou see, my son, how brief the puff 61
 Of all the good that Fortune holds in charge.
 For which mankind strives in such buffetings.
 For all the gold that is below the moon, 64

Or ever was, could not to any one
 Of these poor weary souls procure repose."
 "Master," said I, "Speak yet again to me : 67
 This Fortune, on which thou didst touch but now,
 That holds the world's wealth in her clutch, what is't?"
 And he to me : "O silly creatures, ye, 70
 How vast the ignorance that trips you up !
 Now will I that my doctrine thou chew well.
 He, Who in wisdom doth all things transcend, 73
 Did make the heavens, and set in each a guide,
 So that all parts, each upon each, should shine
 By equal distribution of the light. 76
 And likewise for the splendours of the world,
 One general minister and guide He gave,
 Who, in due permutation, should vain wealth 79
 'Mong nations share, and pass from house to house,
 Beyond the wit of man to countercheck ;
 'Tis thus one nation reigns, and one decays, 82
 According to the sentence passed by her,
 Who, as a snake in grass, lies hid from view.
 Your wisdom cannot against her contend ; 85
 She foresees all things, judges, and maintains
 Her rule, as other Deities their own.
 Incessant change with her knows no repose ; 88
 Necessity keeps her on rapid wing ;
 So quickly one arrives to claim his turn.
 And this is she, to curses oft consigned 91
 By those, who rather should accord her praise,
 Than blame her wrongly with reproachful words.
 Happy herself, she hears them not, and glad, 94
 With all the other first created things
 She rolls her wheel, rejoicing in her bliss.
 But now descend we to more piteous scenes ; 97
 Already sinks each star, that rose, as I
 Set forth ; forbidden is too long a stay."
 We crossed the circle to the other bank 100
 Above a spring that boils and finds a vent

- Along a runlet hollowed by itself.
 Darker than any perse the water was : 103
 And we alongside of its dusky waves
 The bottom reached over an awkward path. }
 A swamp, that bears the name of Styx, is formed 106
 By this sad stream at point, where at the edge
 Of those malignant, dark grey shores it falls.
 And I, who stood intent upon the scene, 109
 Saw people in the slough, o'erlaid with mud,
 All naked, and of angry mien withal.
 They fought with blows, and not with fist alone, 112
 But with the head and chest and with their feet,
 Rending each other piecemeal with their teeth.
 Spake the good Master then : " Thou seest, my son, 115
 The souls of those whom anger overcame :
 And I would have thee well assurèd too,
 That 'neath the water others are who sigh, 118
 And make this water bubble on the top,
 As the eye tells thee, turn it where you may.
 Fixed in the mire they say : " Morose were we 121
 In the sweet air, that sunshine maketh glad,
 Harboursing within the fumes of sullenness ;
 Now sullen lie we in the black morass." 124
 This is the dirge they gurgle in the throat,
 Which they cannot in full formed speech express."
 Thus round the noisome pool did we describe 127
 A wide curve 'tween the dry bank and the swamp,
 With eyes turned towards those who suck up the mire :
 Beneath a tower we at the last arrived. 130

CANTO VIII.

*Fifth Circle—The Wrathful.**Phlegyas—Filippo Argenti—The City of Dis—Resistance
of Demons.*

MY tale pursuing, long I say ere we
 Had reached the basement of the lofty tower,
 Our eyes towards its summit had been raised
 By two small flames that we saw stationed there, 4
 And from afar another signal back,
 At distance that the eye could barely catch,
 To the deep sea of all sound sense I turned, 7
 Asking: "What saith this light, and what replies
 That other fire, and by whom is it made?"
 And he: "On surface of the slimy wave 10
 What is expected thou mayst now discern,
 If the swamp's mist conceal it not from thee."
 Bow-string ne'er shot an arrow from itself, 13
 That through the air as quickly made its way,
 As did a little boat that I discerned
 Coming that moment towards us o'er the pool, 16
 Steer'd by a single boatman all alone,
 Who cried: "Already come, thou felon soul?"
 "Phlegyas, Phlegyas, thy cry is all in vain, 19
 This time at least," was then my lord's reply:
 "Thou'lt have us only while we cross the mire."
 As one who hears that some great fraud hath been 22
 Practised upon him, and who chafes thereat,
 Such in his smothered rage was Phlegyas.
 My leader then went down into the bark, 25
 And made me enter by his side, and when
 I was aboard, I seemed its only freight.
 Soon as my guide and I were in the boat, 28

- Off goes the ancient prow, cleaving its way,
Deeper in water than with other souls.
- As through the dead canal we hurried on, 31
Uprose there one before me drenched in mire,
And said : " Who art thou, coming ere thy time ? "
- And I to him : " I stay not, if I come. 34
But who art thou, changed to this hideous form ? "
- He answer made : " Thou seest I'm one that weeps. "
- And I to him : " In weeping and in woe, 37
Accursèd spirit, do thou then remain ;
I know thee well, all filthy as thou art. "
- Then to the boat he stretched out both his hands : 40
Whereon the quick eyed Master thrust him off,
And said : " Hence, yonder to the other dogs. "
- And then around my neck he threw his arms, 43
And kissed my cheek ; " Rightly indignant soul, "
He said, " Blest be the mother that bare thee.
- That man was in the world most arrogant ; 46
No deed of worth adorns his memory ·
And so his ghost in fury rages here.
- How many up there deem themselves great kings, 49
Who here like swine will wallow in the mire,
Leaving behind them horrible dispraise. "
- And I : " Now Master, would I be right glad 52
To see the wretch immersed in this hell-broth,
Or ever from the lake we issue forth. "
- And he to me : " Or ever now the shore 55
Be in thy view, thou shalt be satisfied.
Right will it be to gratify such wish. "
- And speedily I saw him undergo 58
Such handling from the gentry of the swamp,
That to this day I thank and praise the Lord.
- " Philip Argenti, have at thee, " yelled all ; 61
And the fierce spirit of the Florentine
Turned on himself and rent him with his teeth.
- There left we him ; of him I say no more. 64
But on my ears there fell such strains of woe,

- That with wide open eyes I forward gaze.
- “The City namèd Dis,” the Master said, 67
 “Is nigh, my Son, and mighty throngs within
 Of citizens, sin-laden heavily.”
- And I: “Master, e’en now its minarets 70
 Plain in the valley, yonder I discern,
 Bright red, as though from furnace just put forth.”
- To me he said: “The fire eternal, which 73
 Glows hot within them, shows them ruddy thus,
 As thou dost see in this the nether hell.”
- At length within the deep moats we arrived, 76
 Which compass round that land disconsolate;
 The wall seemed to me as of iron made.
- Not without fetching first a compass wide, 79
 We reached a point, where loud the boatman called
 To us: “Begone, yonder the entrance gate.”
- More than a thousand ’bove the gates I saw, 82
 Once poured from heaven like rain, who savagely
 Hissed out: “And who is this, that ere his death
 Moves through the kingdom of th’ already dead?” 85
- My Master, ever wise, made them a sign
 That secret parley he desired with them;
 A little then they checked their high disdain, 88
 And said: “Come thou alone, let him begone,
 Who has presumed this realm to enter thus;
 Let him return on his fool’s road alone, 91
 And prove if he know how: thou shalt remain,
 Who hast through this dark land escorted him.”
- Think Reader, how I stood discomfited, 94
 At the bare sound of these accursèd words;
 For thought I to return no more to earth.
- “O Guide beloved, who more than seventold times 97
 Hast brought me safety, and hast rescued me
 From peril that rose high in front of me,
 Leave me not now,” I prayed him, “in despair; 100
 And if the farther passage be denied,
 Let us retrace our steps together quick.”

That Lord, who me had thither brought, replied :	103
“ Fear not, for this our course can none deny To us ; by Such hath it been granted us.	
But wait me here ; and with sure hope that I	106
Will not forsake thee in this nether world, Thy wearied spirit comfort and refresh.”	
And so he goes ; and me that father dear	109
Leaves all alone, and in suspense I stay ; For “ yes ” and “ no ” keep on the stretch my brain.	
I could not hear what he proposed to them,	112
But no long time among them did he stay, For one and all rushed in as ’twere a race.	
Right on my Lord’s own breast our enemies	115
Did close the gates, and he remained outside, And back to me returned with tardy steps,	
His eyes to earth were cast, his brow all shorn	118
Of show of boldness, as with sighs he said : “ Who hath denied me these abodes of woe ? ”	
And then to me : “ Be not dismayed that I	121
Should thus be wroth ; master this strife I will, Prepare who may resistance from within.	
This insolence of theirs is nothing new ;	124
They showed it once at a less secret gate, Which to this day remains without a bolt :	
On it thou saw’st the characters of death :	127
E’en now on this side of it down the steep, Passing these circles without escort, one	
Descends, by whom this place shall open fly.”	130

CANTO IX.

*At the Gate of Dis—The Alarm—The Three Furies—
 God's Messenger.
 The Sixth Circle.
 Heretics—Heresiarchs.*

THE pallor that betrayed my coward fear,
 As I beheld my Guide come back, at once
 With him repressed his own unwonted flush.
 He paused attentive, as one listening hard ; 4
 For there the eyes could travel little way
 Through the black air and density of fog.
 "Ours it must be this contest still to win," 7
 'Gan he : " Unless . . . But one the offer made . . .
 Still oh ! how long ere yet that other comes !"
 Well did I note, as he again wrapped up 10
 What he began in what came afterwards,
 His later words were from the first diverse.
 But none the less his utt'rance caused alarm, 13
 Because I drew into his broken speech
 A something worse perchance than what it meant.
 "Far as the bottom of this dismal cone 16
 Doth any from the first grade e'er descend,
 Whose only penalty is bootless hope ?"
 My question such : " Rarely is any found," 19
 He said in answer, " who from out our ranks
 Maketh the journey on which I am bound.
 'Tis true that I another time was here, 22
 Conjured by arts of that grim Erichtho,
 Who to their bodies would the shades recall.
 Short while had been my flesh deprived of me, 25
 When she made me enter within that wall

To fetch a spirit back from Judas' ward. 28
 That is the lowest and the blackest place,
 Farthest from heaven that encircles all.
 The road I know full well, so rest assured.
 This swamp, which aye exhales the noisome stench, 31
 Girdeth this City of distress all round,
 Where without wrath we may not enter now."
 And more he said, that I have not in mind ; 34
 For now mine eyes had drawn me wholly to
 The lofty tower with its crest of fire ;
 Where in a moment suddenly up rose 37
 Infernal Furies, Three, besmeared with blood,
 Whose limbs like woman's had her attitudes.
 With greenest hydras were their waists engirt, 40
 Small serpents and horned snakes served them for hair,
 Plaited in wreaths around their savage brows.
 And he, well knowing the handmaidens, who 43
 Wait on the queen of woe eternal, said :
 " Before thee lo ! the fierce Erinnys stand.
 Megæra this upon the left hand side ; 46
 Alecto weeping there upon the right ;
 Tisiphone between." He said no more.
 Each with her claws was tearing her own breast ; 49
 Self smiting with their palms they shrieked so loud,
 That in alarm I to the Poet clung.
 " Medusa come : so him we'll turn to stone," 52
 They all cried out, with faces fixed below,
 " Theseus' assault but poorly we avenged."
 " Now turn thee backward ; keep thine eyes shut close, 55
 For if the Gorgon shew herself, and thou
 See her, no hope of a return above."
 Such were the Master's words, and he himself 58
 Turned me about, nor trusted to my hands,
 But with his own as well blindfolded me.
 O ye, who have a sound intelligence, 61
 Note well the doctrine which conceals itself
 Beneath the veil of my mysterious lines,

	37
As now across the turbid waves there swept	64
The crashing of a sound with terror filled, Whereat did quake the shores on either side ;	
Not otherwise than when a mighty wind	67
With rush impetuous 'gainst opposing heats, Strikes on the grove ; and held by no restraint,	
Crashes, breaks down, and whirls away the boughs ;	70
Onward it proudly sweeps in clouds of dust, And from it fly wild beasts, the shepherds too.	
Mine eyes set free, he said : " Thy visual nerve	73
Now fix along that ancient foam towards The point when fiercest drives the stinging mist."	
As frogs before their foe, the watersnake,	76
Are scattered everywhere across the pool, Until they lie all huddled in the mud,	
So did I see of ruined souls more than	79
A thousand, flying at the face of One, Who at the Ferry crossed the Styx dryshod.	
From off his brow drove he the close, thick air,	82
Waving his left hand oft in front of him ; And only by this trouble seemed distress'd.	
Well I perceived that he from Heaven was sent,	85
And to the Master turned ; who signed to me Calmly to stand, and in due reverence bend.	
Ah me ! how full of high disdain he seemed !	88
He reached the gate, and to his slender rod It open flew ; no fastening held it back.	
" Outcasts of heaven, ye despised race,"	91
So on the horrid threshold he began, " Why harbour ye such insolence within ?	
Why thus recalcitrant before His Will,	94
Which from its purpose never is disturbed, And which ofttimes hath made your pain more sharp ?	
What boots it thus to dash yourselves 'gainst fate ?	97
Your Cerberus, if well you recollect, For this still shows a jaw and gullèt peeled."	
Then back he turned along the swampy way ;	100

No word he spake to us, but bore the look
 Of one constrained, and spurred by other care
 Than of the man present in fact with him. 103
 On toward the City then we moved our steps,
 At once secure after the holy words.
 Without resistance entered we within ; 106
 And I who was desirous to behold
 What state of things such fortress might enclose,
 When once within, let mine eyes range around, 109
 And see on either side an open plain,
 With anguish and with grievous torments filled,
 E'en as at Arles, where stagnant spreads the Rhone, 112
 And as at Pola near Quarnaro's gulf,
 Which bounds Italia, and her frontier bathes,
 The ground is all uneven made with tombs, 115
 Just so on all sides was the aspect here,
 Except that here the mode was sadder still ;
 For mid the sepulchres spread flames of fire, 118
 Wherein they glowed with so intense a heat,
 That in no craft is more required for iron.
 The lids of all of them were lifted up, 121
 And forth there issued lamentations such
 As plainly came from wretches in their pain.
 And I : " Who, Master, may the people be, 124
 That buried in recesses of these vaults,
 Make themselves heard in sighs of such distress ?"
 And he to me : " Here lie Arch-heretics 127
 With their disciples of all sects, their tombs
 More laden much than thou could'st have supposed :
 Like here with like entombed lie ; and in 130
 The monuments the heat is less or more."
 Then turning to the right hand on we passed
 Between the tortures and the lofty walls. 133

One of those tombs ; whereon unto my Guide
 Somewhat more closely in alarm I drew.
 He said to me : " Turn round ; what doest thou ? 31
 See Farinata there, who stands erect ;
 Upward from belt thou'lt see him at full length."
 Already I had fixed mine eyes on his ; 34
 Upright he rose with brow and breast aloft,
 As though he entertained great scorn of Hell.
 My Guide with ready hands and resolute 37
 Pushed me amid the sepulchres toward him,
 Saying : " Explicit let thy words be now."
 When at the foot before his tomb I stood, 40
 Awhile he eyed me, and almost with scorn
 He asked me then : " Who were thine ancestors ?"
 And I, desirous only to obey, 43
 Concealed them not, but told him of them all :
 Whereat he somewhat lifted up his brows ;
 Then said : " Fierce enemies indeed they were 46
 To me, my fathers and my partizans,
 So that twice over I put them to flight."
 " If hunted forth, they from all sides again 49
 Returned," said I, " the first and second time ;
 That art your friends however learned not well."
 Then there rose up to unobstructed view 52
 A ghost beside him so far as the chin ;
 I trow he'd raised himself upon his knees.
 He looked all round me, as though with the wish 55
 To see if any other were with me ;
 But when he found his half-formed hope was vain,
 With tears he said : " If now thou passest through 58
 This darksome jail by force of genius high,
 Where is my son, and wherefore not with thee ?"
 And I to him : " I come not of myself ; 61
 He who awaits me yonder, leads me here,
 Whom in disdain perhaps your Guido held."
 His words, and mode of punishment beside 64
 Already had revealed to me his name :

So was mine answer fully thus expressed.
 Full length he suddenly drew up, and cried :
 "Held didst thou say ? then is he not alive ?
 Upon his eyes doth not the sweet light fall ?"
 And when he noted somewhat of delay,
 And that in answer I did hesitate,
 Backward he fell, and never re-appeared.
 The other lofty soul, at whose desire
 I halted first, changed not in look the while,
 Nor turned his head, nor e'en inclined aside.
 "And if," as he took up our first discourse,
 "They have but poorly learned that art,
 More torture 'tis to me than e'en this bed.
 But fifty times shall not be re-illumed
 That lady's face, who in this realm is queen,
 Ere thou shalt know how heavy that art weighs.
 An' would'st thou yet to the sweet world return,
 Why, tell me, is that people so unjust
 In all its several laws against my house ?"
 Then I : "The slaughter and the grand defeat,
 That crimson dyed the stream of Arbia,
 A sanction give to such prayers in our church."
 As with a sigh he shook his head, he said,
 "There I was not the only one, and sooth
 Not without cause might I have joined the rest :
 But there I stood alone, when each of them
 Agreed to raze Firenze to the ground,
 And I with open face defended her."
 "So may thy seed be yet sometime in peace,"
 Him I besought, "Unloose for me this knot,
 Wherein my judgment is entangled here.
 It seems that ye foresee, if well I hear,
 That in advance, which time brings with itself ;
 And the things present ye see otherwise."
 "We see, as men with sight imperfect see
 Things," said he, "that from us are far removed ;
 Such glimmering light the most High still vouchsafes :

- As nearer they approach, or are, a blank 103
 Is our perception then, and if none bring
 The news, we nothing know of your estate.
- Hence thou canst apprehend that utterly 106
 Will all our knowledge from that moment die,
 When of futurity the gate is closed.”
- Then in distress at thought of my mistake, 109
 I said ; “ Now shall you say to him who fell,
 That ’mong the living still abides his son.
- And if just now for answer I was mute, 112
 Explain to him it was because e’en then
 My thoughts were in the error you have solved.”
- And now my Master was recalling me ; 115
 So I in greater haste the spirit prayed
 That he would tell me who were with him there.
- He said : “ More than a thousand lie with me : 118
 The second Frederick here within is set ;
 Also the Cardinal : untold the rest.”
- Thereon he vanished ; and my steps I turned 121
 Towards the ancient Bard, revolving still
 The words which seemed disastrous to myself.
- Forward he moved, and as we then walked on, 124
 He said : “ Why art thou thus in mind distraught ? ”
 His question I did fully satisfy.
- “ Let memory retain what thou hast heard 127
 Adverse unto thyself,” so urged the Sage ;
 “ And now take note ; ” his finger then he raised :
- “ When thou shalt stand in her sweet radiance, 130
 Unto whose lovely eye all things are clear,
 From her shalt thou learn thy life’s pilgrimage.”
- Towards the left anon he moved his foot ; 133
 Quitting the wall, we for the centre made
 Along a path, that to a valley struck,
 Which far as to our heights sent up its stench. 136

- It is constructed in three separate rounds.
 'Gainst God, ourselves, our neighbour, violence 31
 In person or on chattels can be done,
 As thou shalt hear in open argument.
- By violence and grievous wounds may death 34
 Upon a neighbour fall ; and on his goods
 Rapine or fire or tolls extortionate :
- So whoso kills or deals malicious blows, 37
 Freebooters, robbers, all in this first ring
 Their torments find, each in his separate group.
- A man against himself can lift his hand, 40
 And 'gainst his goods ; and in the second ring
 'Tis meet that he a bootless penance find,
- Whoever of your world deprives himself, 43
 Or substance wastes, or gambles it away,
 Turning to grief what should have brought him joy.
- Man too can outrage Deity Itself, 46
 In heart denying and blaspheming Him,
 And by despising Nature, and her Gifts.
- So with its own signet the narrowest Round 49
 Seals Sodom and Cahors and whosoe'er
 Says in his heart's contempt there is no God.
- Fraud, whereof each man's conscience feels some sting, 52
 A man can practice on confiding friend,
 And upon one who confidence withholds.
- The latter method seems at least to snap 55
 The link of love which nature makes 'mong men ;
 Wherefore in second circle go to roost
- Hypocrites, flatterers, dealers in witchcraft, 58
 Forgers, and thieves, users of simony,
 Panders, extortioners and all such scum.
- The other mode forgets both natural love, 61
 And that which afterwards is joined to it,
 From which is formed a personal good faith.
- Hence in the straitest circle, central point 64
 Of the whole universe, where Dis presides,
 Whoe'er betrays, for ever is consumed."

- And I : " Most clearly, Master, onward runs
 Thy argument, and well distinguisheth
 This gulf, and all such as inhabit it. 67
- But tell me: those in the thick pool, and they 70
 Whom the wind drives, and whom the rain beats down,
 And those who meet exchanging bitter gibes—
- Why in the flame-red City are not they 73
 Tormented, if in anger God hold them ;
 And if not so, why then in such a plight ? "
- And he to me : " Why doth thine intellect 76
 Thus from the line diverge beyond its wont ?
 Or doth thy mind fix somewhere else its eyes ?
- Doth not thy memory recall the words, 79
 Wherein thy Ethics treat at length upon
 The dispositions three, which Heaven wills not,
- Incontinence and malice and a mad 82
 Brutality ? and how incontinence
 Offends God less, and censure less incurs ?
- If thou keep well this principle in view, 85
 And call to mind who those are up outside,
 And now are undergoing chastisement,
- Thou wilt see well, why from the felons here 88
 They are withdrawn, and why less angrily
 Justice Divine them with its hammer smites. "
- " O Sun, true salve of all distempered sight, 91
 Thou so contentest me, solving my doubt,
 That doubt is welcome, e'en as knowledge is.
- Yet now again," I said, " Turn back thy thought 94
 To what thou said'st of usury, that it
 Offends God's goodness, and untie this knot. "
- " Philosophy," he said, " for him who hears, 97
 Shows, and not merely in one case alone,
 How Nature from Divine Intelligence
- Derives her course, and by Its art proceeds. 100
 And if thy Physiçs thou examine well,
 Thou'lt find, ere many pages thou hast turned,
- That your art follows too, as best it can, 103

Her art, as learner on the master waits,
So that your art a grandchild is of God.
From these two things, if to thy mind thou bring 106
Some early words in Genesis, needs must
Man work to live, and to advance his race.
But as the usurer goes another way, 109
Nature herself he scorns, and her handmaid,
Because he sets his hope on something else.
But forward, follow me, I fain would on : 112
The Fishes quiver on the horizon line,
And due Nor'West now lies the Greater Bear,
And far on yonder we descend the mount. 115

CANTO XII.

Seventh Circle—First Ring—Outrage against Neighbours.

*The Minotaur—The Ruins of Hell—Phlegethon and
the Centaurs.*

Various Characters.

THE place we reached, whence to descend the steep,
 Was Alpine, and, by what was there beside,
 Such as would scare the eye of any man.
 As in the landslip, which upon the flank, 4
 On this side Trento, struck the Adigè
 By earthquake, or the lack of underprop—
 For from the mountain top, from whence it moved, 7
 Down to the plain the cliff is shattered so,
 It might to one above afford a way ;
 Such the descent into the chasm there : 10
 And at the point above the open slope,
 There lay outstretched the infamy of Crete,
 Which in fictitious heifer was conceived : 13
 When he saw us, he rent him with his teeth
 As one, whom fury inwardly consumes.
 Loudly towards him shouted the Sage : “ Perhaps 16
 Thou think’st the Duke of Athens may be here,
 Who in the upper world brought death to thee.
 Out of my way ! foul beast, for here comes one 19
 Without tuition in thy sister’s art,
 Who travelling here beholds your punishments.”
 As is the bull that wildly breaketh loose, 22
 The moment he receives the fatal blow
 And cannot go, but staggers here and there,
 So likewise did I see the Minotaur. 25
 My wary Guide cried out : “ Make for the pass ;
 While thus he raves, ’tis well thou get thee down.”
 So sped we onward o’er that avalanche 28

Of stones, which ever and anon gave way,
 Under th' unwonted burthen of my feet.
 Wrapped in my thoughts I went, and he began : 31
 "Thy thoughts are fixed perhaps upon this wreck,
 O'er which the furious beast I've quelled, keeps guard.
 Now would I have thee know, that other while 34
 When to the lower hell I made my way,
 This rock had not as yet been shattered thus.
 But if I judge aright, short while indeed 37
 Before He came, Who carried off from Dis
 The mighty spoil the upper circle held,
 On all sides of the valley deep and foul, 40
 Such quaking was, I thought the Universe
 Thrilled with that love, which there are some who teach
 Hath ofttimes into Chaos changed the world : 43
 And at that moment this most ancient rock,
 Both here and elsewhere, in this ruin fell :
 But fix thine eyes below, for nigh at hand 46
 The river runs of blood, wherein must boil
 All who do others hurt with violence.
 O blind cupidity, guilty and mad withal, 49
 That in brief life so goadest us, and in
 Th' Eternal seestest us in misery !
 I saw a broad fosse fashioned like a bow, 52
 As though it would embrace the plain all round,
 Just as mine escort had described to me.
 Between the basement of the cliff and it 55
 Centaurs in file, equipped with arrows, rode,
 As to the chace they went i'th' world above.
 Perceiving us descend, they halted each, 58
 And from the group detached, three forward came,
 With bows and arrows chosen previously.
 And at a distance one cried out : "To what 61
 Torment come ye, who here descend the steep?
 Stand and declare : if not, I draw the bow."
 My Master said : "In Chiron's presence there, 64
 The answer we return you shall be made.

- E'en to thy hurt thy will was ever prompt." 49
- He touched me then, and said: "Tis Nessus this, 67
 Who for the lovely Deianira died,
 And his own vengeance for himself prepared:
 The middle one with eye fixed on his breast, 70
 Is the great Chiron, who Achilles reared:
 Pholus the other, ever full of wrath."
- All round the moat these in their thousands ride, 73
 Shooting each soul that from the bloody pool
 Emerges further than his crime permits."
- Nearer to these fleet monsters we approached; 76
 An arrow Chiron drew, and with its notch
 Backward behind his jaws he tossed his beard.
- When his great mouth he had exposèd thus, 79
 He to his comrades said: "Have ye observed
 The man behind makes what he touches move;
 This dead men's feet are never wont to do." 82
 And my kind Guide, who now had reached the breast,
 Where the two natures find their common bond,
 Replied: "He lives indeed, and right it is 85
 Through the dark vale I guide him thus alone:
 Necessity brings him, and no caprice.
- From hymns of Alleluia came there one, 88
 Who this strange office did to me confide.
 No robber he, nor I a runaway.
- But in that Virtue's Name whereby I move 91
 My onward steps along this savage road,
 Grant of thy troop some one of these at hand,
 To show us where 'tis safe to take the ford, 94
 And on the crupper set this man behind;
 For he no spirit is to float through air."
- Chiron then turning round towards the right, 97
 Charged Nessus thus: "Go back, show them the way,
 And bid what troop you chance to meet give place."
- We with this trusty escort forward moved 100
 Along the edge of that red bubbling pool,
 Whence from the scalded issued rending shrieks.

People I saw up to their eyebrows plunged, 103
 And the huge Centaur said: "Tyrants are these,
 Who set their hands to rapine and to blood.
 Here they bewail their merciless misdeeds: 106
 Here's Alexander, Dionysius too,
 Who years of suffering brought to Sicily;
 And yonder brow, o'erhung by those dark locks, 109
 Is Azzolin; the other fair one there
 Obizzo is of Estè, whom in truth
 His stepson murdered in the world above." 112
 Then as to him I turned, the Poet said:
 "Let him the first place take, the second me."
 A little farther on the Centaur stopped 115
 Beside a group, who far as to the throat
 Seemed from the bubbling caldron to emerge.
 A Ghost he showed us by himself apart, 118
 Saying: "In God's own bosom he stabbed through
 That heart, which on the Thames is still revered."
 Next saw I people, who above the stream 121
 Held head and chest entirely lifted out,
 More than a few of whom I recognized.
 And thus went on in ever sinking flood 124
 The pool of blood, till but the feet it boiled:
 And there our passage lay across the moat.
 "Just as thou seest that ever at this end 127
 The boiling flood grows shallower, even so,"
 The Centaur said, "I would that thou believe,
 That towards the other end with gradual fall 130
 The bottom sinks, until it settles down,
 Where it behoves that tyranny should mourn.
 God's Justice there plagues with due recompence 133
 The Attila, who was on earth a scourge;
 Pyrrhus and Sextus too; and evermore
 Drains off the tears, that boiling heat unlocks 136
 From Rinier of Corneto, and Rinier
 Named Pazzo, who on the highways waged such wars."
 Then he turned back, and crossed the ford again. 139

CANTO XIII.

Seventh Circle—Second Ring.

*Outrage upon Self—The Dolorous Grove—Pier della
Vigne—Suicides.*

*Lano da Siena—Jacopo da San' Andrea—A Florentine
Suicide.*

NOT yet had Nessus reached the other side,
 When we had thrown ourselves into a grove,
 Where not a vestige of a path was traced.
 Not green the foliage, but of dusky hue, 4
 Not smooth the branches, but twisted and gnarled ;
 No apples there, but only poisonous haws.
 Thickets so rough and dense 'tween Cecina 7
 And Corneto the wild beasts cannot find,
 That shun with hate a cultivated space.
 Here do the hideous harpies make their nests, 10
 Who drove the Trojans from the Strophades,
 Mid dire presages of impending woe.
 Broad wings they have, faces and necks of men, 13
 Claws on their feet, huge bellies feathered o'er,
 And screech their dirges mid the strange tree tops.
 And the good Master : " Ere thou farther go, 16
 Know that thou art within the second ring,"
 So he began to say, " and wilt be till
 Unto a place of horrid sand thou come. 19
 Wherefore take note, and so things thou wilt see,
 Which did I tell thee would o'ertax belief."
 On every side I heard continuous moans, 22
 But saw I none from whom they might proceed :
 Whereon I stood still in bewilderment.
 I think that he was thinking that I thought 25
 So many sounds amid those trunks must come

From some, who fain would hide themselves from us.
 Wherefore the Master said: "If thou break off 28
 Some little twig from any of these trees,
 Idle surmises will thy thoughts be found."
 Then forth I put my hand a little way, 31
 And from a great thorn pluck'd a slender twig;
 When loudly shrieked its trunk: "Why strip me thus?"
 And when it had become all dark with blood, 34
 It then renewed its cry: "Why rend me so?
 Hast thou no spirit of compassion left?
 Men were we once, but now are turn'd to stocks: 37
 More pitiful thy hands might surely be,
 If we'd been nothing but the souls of snakes."
 As with green sapling which is set on fire 40
 At one end, and the other drips in tears,
 And hisses with the air that rushes out,
 So from that fracture came there out at once 43
 Both words and blood, whereat I let the tip
 Droop toward the ground, and terror-struck I stood.
 "O wounded soul," such answer made my Sage, 46
 "Had he been able to believe at first
 What he had seen though only in my verse,
 'Gainst thee he would not have stretched out his hand; 49
 But so incredible a thing made me
 Suggest an act, of which I feel the weight.
 But tell him who thou wast; so that to make 52
 Thee some amends, he may thy name revive
 Up in the world, where he may still return."
 And then the tree: "Me thy sweet speech allures 55
 Silence to break; and may it not tire you,
 If to thy bait I rise for brief discourse.
 I am the man, who erst kept both the keys 58
 Of Frederick's heart, and them I used to turn
 So deftly, locking and unlocking it,
 That from his secrets I shut most men out. 61
 At this high post I served so faithfully,
 That sleep and energy alike gave way.

The strumpet, who her eyes of wantonness 64
 From palace of a Cæsar ne'er withdrew,
 The common vice and bane of every court,
 Inflamed 'gainst me the hearts of all around ; 67
 And they inflamed, inflamed Augustus so,
 That my glad honours turned to dismal griefs.
 My soul in sentiment of high disdain, 70
 Thinking by death it would escape disdain,
 Made me, though just, against myself unjust.
 By this tree's new-formed roots I swear to you, 73
 That never from true fealty did I swerve
 To my liege lord, who honour aye deserved ;
 And if unto the world either of you 76
 Return, restore my memory that still lies
 Smitten beneath the blow that envy struck."
 He paused awhile ; and then the Poet said : 79
 "Silent he is ; lose not the moment then,
 But speak, and ask him if thou wouldst know more."
 And I replied : "Do thou again ask him, 82
 What thou dost think will satisfy me most ;
 Self I cannot ; pity so wrings my heart."
 Then he again began : "So may the man 85
 For thee do gladly, what thy words implore,
 Spirit incarcerate, be pleasèd still
 To tell us how the soul imprisoned is 88
 Within these knots ; and tell us, if thou may,
 Is ever any from such limbs set free."
 First with a rushing gust the trunk replied, 91
 And next that wind changed to a voice like this :
 "Briefly my answer shall be made to you.
 Soon as the desperate soul in passion goes 94
 Forth from the body, sever'd by wilful act,
 Minos remits it to the seventh gulf.
 Into the wood it drops, not on a spot 97
 Chosen afore, but as chance haps to fling ;
 And there it germinates like grain of spelt.
 The sapling sprouts, and grows to forest tree : 100

The Harpies, feeding then upon its leaves,
 Both cause a pang, and for the pang a vent.

Like others we shall seek the spoils we cast, 103
 But none of us to clothe himself therewith ;
 Not meet for man to don what man had doffed.
 But hither shall we drag them, and throughout 106
 The dolorous grove our bodies will be hung,
 Each on the thorn of its tormented ghost."

Attentive at the tree we waited still, 109
 Thinking that it had more it wished to say,
 When by a rushing sound we were surprised ;
 E'en as the man, who at his post, perceives 112
 The boar approach, and in full cry the field,
 And hears the bay of hounds and crash of boughs.
 And lo ! upon our left the forms of two, 115
 Naked, with scratches torn, and flying hard,
 Dashed through the trellis of the tangled wood.
 The one in front : " Now come, come quick, O death ! " 118
 The other seeming to himself too slow,
 Cried out : " Not nimble thus thy legs, Lano,
 The day thou didst in joust of Toppo fight." 121
 And then, perhaps because his breath ran short,
 He crept in one heap, tangled with a bush.
 Behind them was the wood, scoured by full pack 124
 Of hounds, black, ravenous, and rushing on,
 Like greyhounds which from leash have just been slipped.
 As there he squatted, upon him they fixed 127
 Their teeth, and tore him piecemeal limb from limb,
 Which off they carried quivering in their pain.
 Thereon mine escort took me by the hand, 130
 And led me to the bush, which all in vain
 Bewailed its fractures streaming forth in blood.
 " James of S. Andrew," it cried out, " to thee 133
 What boots it to make me thy hiding place ?
 What blame have I for thy abandoned life ?"
 And when my Master halted over it, 136
 He said : " Who wast thou, who at all these points

Breathest in blood thy dolorous appeal?"
And he to us: "Ye souls, who have arrived 139
To witness this foul outrage of disgrace,
Which hath from me my branches thus torn off,
Collect them at the foot of this sad bush: 142
Mine was the City, for the Baptist which
Changed her first Patron, who thenceforth for this
Will with his own art make her ever sad: 145
And did there not on Bridge of Arno stand
Some semblance of him yet in open view,
Those citizens, who built her up again 148
Upon the ashes left by Attila,
Had in their labour found a bootless task.
I of my own rooftree a gibbet made. 151

CANTO XIV.

Seventh
Second Circle—Third Ring.

*Outrage against God—Capaneus—The Old Man of
 Crete—The Rivers of Hell.*

STIRRED by affection for my native place,
 I gathered in a heap the scattered fronds,
 And gave them him, whose voice began to fail.
 From thence we reached the limit, where divides 4
 The second round from third, and where indeed
 Justice reveals her work most horribly.
 The strange new scene more clearly to describe, 7
 I say we came unto a barren plain,
 Which on its surface not a blade allows.
 The dolorous grove stands like a garland round, 10
 As by the dismal fosse itself is girt ;
 Here on its utmost edge our steps we stayed.
 One deep and arid sand was all the expanse, 13
 Nor formed in other fashion than was that,
 Which by the feet of Cato once was trod.
 Vengeance of God ! how fearful should'st thou seem 16
 To every man, who in my story reads
 What now unto mine eyes was manifest !
 Of souls quite naked saw I many a herd, 19
 Who all bemoaned a common misery ;
 Yet seemed they subject to distinctive rules.
 Some on the ground lay stretched upon their backs ; 22
 Seated were some, huddled in crouching form,
 While others wandered in continuous tramp.
 They, who thus moved above, more numerous were ; 25
 Those fewer, who in torment lay prostrate,
 But to a fiercer wail their tongues were loosed.
 O'er all the sand there fell in slow descent 28
 A steady downpour of broad flakes of fire,
 Like Alpine snow that falls when winds are still.
 As Alexander on the heated plains 31

Of India saw descend upon his host
 Flames that came down unbroken to the ground,
 And so provided that with heel his troops 34
 Should stamp the soil in, easier to put out
 Each single flame, while it was still alone ;
 E'en so fell evermore the eternal heat, 37
 Which set the sand afire, as tinder is
 'Neath flint and steel, to add a double woe.
 In restless dance of blows their wretched hands 40
 Sought first on this side, then on that to drive
 Away from them the aye fresh falling fires.
 "Master," 'gan I, "who all things dost o'ercome, 43
 Save and alone the demons obstinate
 That rushed against us at the entrance gate,
 Who is yon giant that seems not to heed 46
 The fire, and lies the while in brutal scorn,
 Defiant so, no downpour softens him ?"
 And he himself, who was aware that I 49
 Was questioning the Master about him,
 Cried out : "What when alive, such am I dead.
 Though at the anvil Jove tire out his smith, 52
 From whom in wrath he snatched the sharpened bolt,
 Wherewith on my last day I was struck down ;
 Or though in turn he tire out all the rest 55
 In Mongibello at the dusky forge,
 Crying : Good Vulcan, to the rescue come,
 As erst he did on Phlegra's battlefield ; 58
 Though with full force he hurl his shafts at me,
 He shall not taste the pleasure of revenge."
 Then spake my Guide with emphasis so stern, 61
 I ne'er had heard such force from him before :
 "O Capaneus, in that thy pride is still
 Untamed, so greater grows thy punishment. 64
 No torture, save the frenzy of thy rage,
 Would for thy fury be due penalty."
 To me he turned again with gentler look, 67
 And said : "One of the seven kings was he,

Who Thebes besieged ; he held, and seems to hold
 God in disdain, and count Him little worth. 70
 But, as I said to him, his blasphemies
 Are ornaments that well befit his breast.
 Now follow me, and yet once more beware 73
 Thou press not with thy feet the red-hot sand,
 But keep them close within the forest verge."
 In silence then we came where breaketh out 76
 Forth from the grove a rivulet, so red,
 Its tint e'en now makes my hair stand on end.
 As from the Bulicamé starts a rill, 79
 Which 'mong themselves the sinful women share,
 Such downward through the sand that streamlet ran.
 The bottom and the slopes on either hand, 82
 And causeways 'long the side were petrified ;
 Whereby I judged our passage lay that way.
 " Amid all else that I have shewn to thee, 85
 Since first we made our entrance through the gate,
 Whereof the threshold is to none denied,
 There hath not been unto thine eyes disclosed 88
 A thing so notable as is this stream,
 Which quenches all the flamelets over it."
 Such were the words my Guide addressed to me : 91
 Whereon I begg'd him grant the full repast,
 For which he'd given me the appetite.
 " Far out mid-sea there lies a wasted land," 94
 Said he continuing, " which is known as Crete,
 Under whose king the world was one time chaste.
 A mountain rises there, which erst rejoiced 97
 In stream and woodland ; Ida is its name ;
 'Tis now deserted like a worn out thing.
 Rhea once chose it as a cradle safe 100
 For her young son, whom better to conceal,
 She bade loud shouts be raised, whene'er he cried.
 Within the mountain stands a grand Old Man, 103
 Erect, his back to Damietta turned,
 His eyes, as on his mirror, fixed on Rome.

- His head is fashioned of the finest gold ; 106
 And of pure silver are his arms and chest,
 Thereafter bronze as far as to the fork ;
 From thence still downward of the choicest iron, 109
 Save that the right foot is of baken clay,
 On which, more than the other, straight he stands.
 Each of these parts, except the gold, is by 112
 A fissure cleft, that distils tears in drops.
 And these collected perforate that grot.
 Down to this valley o'er the rocks they run, 115
 Form Acheron, Styx, Phlegethon, and then
 Through this contracted channel they descend
 At last to point where nothing lower sinks, 118
 There form Cocytus ; and what that pool is,
 Thyself wilt see, so now 'tis not described."
 And I to him : " If the stream present here 121
 Thus takes its rise within that world of ours,
 Why at this forest's edge is it first seen ?"
 And he to me : " Thou know'st this place is round, 124
 And though thou now hast travelled far through it,
 Descending by the left to lower depths,
 Its circle hast thou yet not fully turned ; 127
 Therefore if something do appear that's new,
 It need not spread amazement o'er thy face."
 And I again : " Where, Master, then are found 130
 Lethe and Phlegethon ? silent on one,
 Thou say'st the other by this rain is formed."
 " With all thy questions truly am I pleased," 133
 He said, " But the red bubbling of the pool
 Should answer well that which thou makest now.
 Lethe thou'lt see, but outside this abyss, 136
 There, where the souls repair to wash them clean,
 When sin repented of has been removed."
 He added then : "'Tis time we turn aside 139
 Now from the grove ; so follow me behind ;
 These causeways form our path, for they burn not,
 And over them extinguished is all fire." 142

CANTO XV.

Seventh Circle—Third Ring.

Outrage against Nature—Brunetto Latini—Francesco

d'Accorso—Andrea de' Mozzi.

OF the hard causeways one now carries us,
 While the o'erhanging mist above the stream
 Shelters from fire the water and the banks.
 Just as the Flemings 'twixt Wissant and Bruges, 4
 Fearing the tide which rushes in toward them.
 Raise a defence to hold the sea in check ;
 As too, along the Brenta, Paduans 7
 Seek shelter for their castles and their farms,
 Ere Chiarentana feels the summer heat,
 So in like fashion were the structures here ; 10
 Although, whoe'er he was, in height and breath
 The Master built them to a smaller scale.
 Already were we distant from the wood 13
 So far that I should not have seen its place,
 If backward I had thither turned my eyes,
 When on our way we met a troop of souls, 16
 Coming along the bank side ; and each one
 Peered in our faces, as by night men may
 Eye one another in a new moon's light ; 19
 And looking towards us, these pursed up their lids,
 Like an old tailor at his needle's eye.
 Thus scrutinised by such a party, I 22
 Was recognised by one, who on my skirt
 Laid hold, and loudly cried : " What marvel's this ?"
 And, when towards me he had outstretched his arm, 25
 I fixed mine eyes hard on his baked aspect,
 So that his smoke-dried visage hindered not
 The recognition of him in my mind ; 28

- And I, stooping my hand down to his face,
 Made answer : " Ser Brunetto, are you here ? "
- And he : " My son, let it not thee displease,
 If now awhile Brunetto Latini
 With thee return, and let his file go on."
- I said : " With all my heart I pray you come :
 And if you will that I sit down with you,
 'Tis well, if he agree with whom I go."
- " My Son," he said, " Whoever of this herd
 One moment halts, lies then a hundred years
 Without a sheltering screen, when strikes the fire.
 Wherefore proceed ; I at thy skirts will come,
 And afterward my company rejoin,
 Which goes lamenting their eternal loss."
- I did not dare to step down off the path
 To walk beside him, but I kept my head
 Bow'd low, as one who goes respectfully.
- 'Gan he : " What destiny, or fortune what,
 Ere thy last day, doth hither bring thee down ?
 And who is this that shows thee thus the way ? "
- " Yonder above us in the life serene,"
 I answered him, " ere yet my full tale told
 Of years, I in a valley lost myself ;
 On it but yestermorn I turned my back ;
 Then, ready to relapse, this one appeared,
 Who homeward now conducts me by this path."
- And he to me : " But follow thine own star,
 And thou a glorious haven canst not miss,
 If in the fairer life I judged aright.
- And had not death called me too soon away,
 Seeing that heaven to thee is so benign,
 In all thy work would I have cheered thee on.
- But that ungrateful people and malign,
 Which from Fièsolè came down of old,
 And savours still of mountain and of rock,
 Will for thy good deeds be thine enemy :
- With reason too : for midst the harsh wine-sours

It is not seemly that the sweet fig fruit.
 By old repute the world held them as blind, 67
 A people greedy, envious and proud ;
 From all their habits see that thou keep clean.
 Reserved for thee Fortune such honour holds, 70
 That either side will hunger after thee ;
 But from the goat the grass must be far off.
 Let beasts of Fièsolè their litter find 73
 Among themselves, nor let them touch the plant,
 If on their dunghill any should spring up,
 In which once more the holy seed revives 76
 Of Romans, such as 'mong them still were left,
 When it became the nest of so much sin."
 "If what I prayed for had been all fulfilled," 79
 My answer was "you would not yet have been
 Thus banished from the race of living men.
 For in my mind is fixed, and wounds my heart 82
 The image of your goodness in the world,
 As of a father dear, when hour by hour
 You taught me how the man eternal grows : 85
 And while I live the gratitude I feel
 For this 'tis right my tongue should well declare :
 What of my future you foretell I write, 88
 And keep it with like words for her to solve,
 If I a Lady reach, who will explain.
 Thus much I would make manifest to you ; 91
 If only conscience do not me upbraid,
 Come Fortune as she will, ready am I.
 Such earnest to my ear is nothing new, 94
 Therefore let Fortune turn her wheel about
 At will, and let the boor his mattock ply,"
 My Master then, turning upon his right, 97
 Behind him looked, and fixed his eye on me ;
 Then said : "He listens well, who makes his note."
 And talking none the less I onward go 100
 With Ser Brunetto ; and I ask who 'mong
 His comrades are the highest and best known.

- And he to me : 'Tis well that some you know ; 103
 Others 'tis better we in silence leave,
 For time would fail to tell the roll of all.
- In fine however know they all were clerks, 106
 Great men of letters, and of great repute,
 But in the world all with the same sin stained.
- Priscian tramps on in that unhappy gang, 109
 Francesco d'Accorso with him ; and if
 For such a scurvy rascal thou should'st care,
 Him mayst thou see, whom *Servus Servorum* 112
 From Arno to Bacchiglione sent,
 Where in ill plight he left his misused limbs.
- More could I name, but our discourse and walk 115
 May not be now prolonged, and that I see
 New smoke arising yonder from the sand.
- Persons approach, with whom I may not be : 118
 To thy care let me my *Tesoro* leave ;
 In it I'm still alive ; no more I ask."
- Then he turned round, and seemed like one of those, 121
 Who at Verona for the green cloth run
 Across the plain ; and seemed withal the one
 That wins the race, and not the one that fails. 124

CANTO XVI.

*Seventh Circle—Third Ring—Outrage against Nature—
Guido Guerra—Tegghiaio Aldobrandi and Jacopo
Rusticucci—The Cataract and Geryon.*

ALREADY I was where upon mine ear
 The sound of water tumbling to the round
 Below boomed like the humming of a hive ;
 When three ghosts all together started forth, 4
 Running at speed, from out a group that passed
 Beneath the downpour of the torturing fire.
 Toward us they came, and loudly each cried out : 7
 “ Halt thou, who by thy raiment seem’st to be
 A denizen of our depravèd land.”
 Ah me ! what wounds I saw upon their limbs, 10
 Recent and old, burnt in by scorching fire !
 It pains me still even to think of them.
 My Teacher paused, attentive to their cries ; 13
 He turned his face toward me, and “ Wait awhile,”
 He said : “ To these some courtesy is due.
 But for the fire indeed, which in this place 16
 Nature shoots forth, I should have said for thee
 ’Twere fitter than for them to hasten on.”
 As now we paused, again did they renew 19
 Their old refrain, and coming up to us,
 They formed themselves all three into a wheel,
 As champions stripped and oiled are wont to do, 22
 Watching to get their vantage and a grip,
 Before they yet have come to blows or thrusts.
 So each with face fixed steadily on me, 25
 They wheeled in course continuous with neck
 Ever outstretched reversely to the feet.
 “ And if the misery of this shifting plain,” 28

So one began, "and our black, blistered forms
 Bring us and our entreaties to contempt,
 Let our past fame incline thy heart to us, 31
 And tell us who thou art, that safely thus
 On living feet art tramping on through hell.
 This one, in whose footsteps thou seest me tread, 34
 Blistered and naked though he travel on,
 Was once of nobler rank than thoud'st suppose.
 Of good Gualdrada he the grandson was : 37
 Guida Guerra his name, who in his life
 Did much by prudence and no less with sword.
 And he, who through the sand follows my track, 40
 Is Tegghiaio Aldobrandi, name
 That should be welcome in the upper world.
 Myself, the partner of their torment, was 43
 Jacopo Rusticucci ; whom indeed
 A savage wife wounds the most cruelly."
 Had I but been protected from the fire, 46
 I would have flung myself mid them below,
 And think the Master would have suffered it.
 But as I should have been there baked and broiled, 49
 Terror o'ercame my kindlier desire,
 That made me greedy to embrace them all.
 Then I began : "It was not scorn, but grief, 52
 Such that I do not quickly shake it off,
 That your condition inly pierced me with,
 Soon as from this my Lord I heard the words 55
 From which I did in thought divine that some,
 Such as yourselves, were on the way to us.
 Of your own land am I ; and at all times 58
 Your exploits and your honoured names have I
 Recalled and listened to with love sincere.
 Flying from gall, I seek the sweeter fruit, 61
 Promised by this my truthful guide ; but first
 Down to mid centre must I make my plunge."
 "So may thy soul for long years still direct 64
 Thy mortal limbs," said he in answer then,

" And so thy fame shine glorious after thee,
 Tell me, do courtesy and valour dwell 67
 Within our city, as was wont of yore,
 Or are they utterly cast out of her?
 For William Borsierè, who but now 70
 Joined us in woe, and yonder with our mates
 Moves on, doth by his tidings vex us sore."
 " The upstart people and their sudden gains 73
 Pride and extravagance have bred in thee,
 For which e'en now, O Florence, thou dost weep."
 Such was my cry, raising my face aloft: 76
 The three, who took this for my answer, stared
 One at the other, as one stares at Truth.
 " If other times as little it cost thee," 79
 Answered they all, " others to satisfy,
 Happy art thou, thus speaking at thy will.
 So if from these dark regions thou escape, 82
 Returned to see the lovely stars again,
 When thought ' I was there once ' will joyous be,
 Mind to our neighbours that thou mention us." 85
 Then breaking up their ring, away they fled;
 Rapid as wings their legs appeared to us.
 An " Amen " could not one more quickly say, 88
 Than from our view they vanished out of sight;
 Wherefore the Master thought it well to move.
 I followed him, and short way had we gone, 91
 When now the water sounded so near us,
 That had we spoken, scarce had we been heard.
 E'en as the stream that from Mount Viso first 94
 Holds its own course towards the Eastern shore,
 Flowing on left hand of the Apennines,
 Called Acquacheta in the upper heights, 97
 Ere in the vale it finds a lower bed,
 And at Forlì loses its previous name,
 Above St. Benet of the Alp resounds, 100
 As in one leap it tumbles to the plain,
 Where full a thousand might be houséd well;

- So from the bottom of a broken cliff 103
 We heard the echoes of the lurid flood
 In tones that quickly would have stunned the ear.
 A cord I carried girt around my waist ; 106
 Once on a time I thought I might with it
 Have caught the leopard with the dappled hide.
 When I had quite unloosed this from myself, 109
 As had my Leader bidden me to do,
 To him I held it, rolled and twisted up.
 Thereon he turned him to the right, and then 112
 At some slight distance outward from the edge,
 He flung it down into the deep abyss.
 Now something strange I thought within myself, 115
 Must to so strange a signal answer make,
 Which with his eye the Master follows thus.
 Ah ! Ah ! how very cautious men should be 118
 With those who see not outward acts alone,
 But with discernment scan the inner thought.
 He said to me : " Soon to the top will come 121
 What I await ; and what thou dreamest of,
 Should to thy vision soon disclose itself."
 Always should man to truth, that hath a form 124
 Of falsehood, close his lips long as he can,
 For it without his fault may bring him shame.
 But silent here I cannot be, and swear, 127
 Reader, by rhymes of this my Comedy,
 So may they not be void of lasting fame,
 Through that obscure and heavy air I saw 130
 The figure of a swimmer upward rise ;
 A marvel even to a steadfast heart ;
 Just as a man returns, who sometime dives 133
 Below to clear an anchor, which has caught
 A reef, or something hidden in the sea,
 With head erect, and feet well gathered up. 136

CANTO XVII.

*Seventh Circle—Third Ring—Outrage on Social Life—
Geryon—Scrovigno—Buiamonte—Descent into the Eighth
Circle.*

“**B**EHOLD the savage beast with pointed tail,
That scales the heights, through wall and weapon
bursts,
Behold him, who with taint infects the world.”
Thus did my Guide begin his speech to me, 4
And motioned it with sign to come ashore,
Near where the stone-built quay we’d traversed ends.
And onward came that loathsome image of 7
Deceit, and landed with his head and breast ;
But to the bank he drew up not his tail.
His face was face as of an honest man ; 10
So kindly seemed its surface outwardly,
But trunk and all the rest was serpent-like.
Two paws he had, shaggy to shoulder blade ; 13
The back, the breast, and both the two sides were
Painted with nooses and with little wheels.
More colours upon web and woof of cloth 16
Never did Turk or Tartar interweave,
Nor tissues such Arachne overlay.
As boats sometimes upon the beach are hauled, 19
And half on land and half in water lie,
And as down there where guzzling Germans dwell,
The beaver squats to carry on his war, 22
So this most evil beast planted himself
On the stone kerb that holds the sand in check.
In empty space he twirled his length of tail, 25
Twisting in th’ air aloft its venomed fork,
Wherewith like scorpion’s it was armed at point.
My Leader said : “ Needs must we now somewhat 28

- Divert our course so far at least as where
That savage beast across it lies outstretched.”
- And therefore to the right hand we went down, 31
And moved ten paces to the utmost verge,
Careful to clear alike the sand and fire.
- And when to him we now had nearly come, 34
A little farther off upon the sand
I see folks seated near the open space.
- The Master then : “ In order that a full 37
Acquaintance with this Round thou bear away,
Go now,” he said, “ and their demeanour note ;
- There let thine intercourse with them be brief. 40
Till thou return, I will persuade this beast
To lend his brawny shoulders to our use.”
- Thus once again at now the farthest point 43
Of this the seventh circle I, alone
Moved toward the persons who in sorrow sat.
- From out their eyes was gushing forth their woe : 46
Waving their hands on this side and on that,
Shelter they sought from flame or burning soil.
- Just as in summer season do the dogs 49
With paws or muzzle, when they feel the bite
Of fleas, or are by flies and hornets teased.
- On certain faces when I'd set mine eyes, 52
On whom the dolorous fire is raining down,
None did I recognize ; but I observed
- That from the neck of each there hung a pouch, 55
Of hue distinctive with a special badge,
Whereon their eyes seem greedily to gloat ;
- And as I pass along them, noting each, 58
On yellow purse I saw an azure sign,
Which of a lion bore the face and form.
- And as I push my observation on, 61
Another I beheld, as red as blood,
Display a goose whiter than butter far ;
- And one who bore in azure the device 64
On his white satchel of a pregnant sow,

Said to me : " What in this ditch dost thou here ?
 Now go thy way, and since thou livest still, 67
 Know that Vitaliano, my neighbour,
 Shall here sit down beside me on my left.
 With these Florentines Paduan am I ; 70
 Oft and again they deafen quite mine ears,
 Shouting, " Come, sovran prince of all of us,
 Who wilt with thee the pouch and three beaks bring." 73
 Then twisted he his mouth awry, and forth
 He shot his tongue, like ox that licks his nose.
 In fear that longer stay might him displease, 76
 Who of a short stay had admonished me,
 I turned my back upon those weary souls.
 I found the Leader mounted even now 79
 Upon the crupper of the savage beast ;
 He said to me ; " Now brave and bold be thou ;
 By stair-way such must we just now descend : 82
 Mount thou in front ; I in the midst would sit ;
 So shall the tail do thee no injury."
 As one who feels so near the shivering fit 85
 Of quartan ague that his nails are blanched,
 And shudders merely at the sight of shade,
 Such I became at utterance of these words ; 88
 But his reproach brought me the shame that makes
 A servant brave before a valiant lord.
 Upon those monstrous shoulders I sat down ; 91
 " Only," I would have said, but no words came,
 As I had hoped, " be sure thou hold me fast."
 But he who had helped me in other straits 94
 At other times, soon as I mounted now,
 Clasped me within his arms, and held me up,
 " Now Geryon," said he, " forward, and move off ; 97
 Thy sweep be wide, and gentle thy descent ;
 Think what a strange load thou upon thee hast."
 As from its mooring backs a little boat, 100
 Stern first, so he likewise got off from thence.
 But when he felt he now could make good play,

To where his breast was, twisted he his tail, 103
 Then thrust it out and worked it like an eel,
 And with his paws drew to himself the air.
 No greater fear, I deem, could that have been 106
 Of Phaeton, when away he flung the reins,
 And th' heaven caught fire, as to this day is seen :
 Nor when from off his back poor Icarus 109
 Felt his wings fall, as melted the hot wax,
 While cried his father : "Thou art going wrong,"
 Than was my own, when on all sides I found 112
 Only the air, and all things visible
 Vanish from view, except the beast alone.
 Slowly it swims, slowly it onward goes, 115
 Wheels and descends, but nought do I perceive,
 Save that a wind drives upward on my face.
 Already on my right I heard the pool 118
 Raging beneath us with a horrid roar,
 Whereat with head outstretched I downward gazed.
 With greater fear the precipice filled me : 121
 For fires I saw and lamentations heard,
 And in alarm more tightly gripped my seat.
 And then I saw, what I had not before, 124
 How we went down in curves, by the sad scenes,
 That from alternate sides came into view.
 As falcon, which hath been long time on wing, 127
 And seen no bird nor lure of any kind,
 Makes falconer cry : "Stooping already, Eh?"
 And weary drops, with many a hundred curves, 130
 At point, whence she had been so keen to start,
 And far from falconer sullenly alights,
 So at the bottom Geryon landed us, 133
 Close by the basement of the jagged rock,
 And having now discharged him of our load,
 As arrow from the string, he disappeared. 136

CANTO XVIII.

*Eighth Circle—First Crevasse—Pandors and Seducers—
Venedico Caccianimico—Jason—Second Crevasse—
Flatterers—Alessio Interminci.*

A PLACE there is in hell, Sin-pouches called,
 All of hard rock, in hue ferruginous,
 Like the engirding zone that round it curves. 4
 Right in the centre of this sinful garth
 There yawns a pit both very wide and deep :
 Of its construction I in place will speak.
 The precinct then, which 'tween this pit remains 7
 And foot of the high, rocky cliff is round ;
 Its surface by ten separate valleys cleft.
 As is the form presented to the eye 10
 By places, where for safety of their walls
 Our castles are by many moats girt round,
 Such here the aspect, which by these was borne ; 13
 And as from threshold of such fortresses,
 Small bridges run far as the outmost bank,
 So from the base of cliff ran shelving reefs, 16
 That crossed the banks down to the pit,
 Which finally collects and cuts them off.
 'Twas in such place, shaken off Geryon's back, 19
 That we did find ourselves ; and to the left
 The Poet held his way, I after him.
 On the right hand new sufferings I beheld, 22
 New torments, and new executioners,
 With whom the first crevasse was overrun.
 Naked the sinners were down in the depth : 25
 Our side the midway they came facing us ;
 On 'th 'other went our way, at quicker pace.
 In year of Jubilee the Romans thus, 28

By reason of the hosts upon the bridge,
 Arranged for passengers to make their way :
 On one side all who to St. Peter's go, 31
 Pass with their faces toward the Castle set ;
 But on the other to the Mount proceed.
 On either side over the murky stone, 34
 Demons with horns I saw, armed with huge whips,
 Wherewith they scourged them fiercely from behind.
 Ah ! how they made them nimble on their shanks 37
 At the first lash ; not one of them there was,
 Who for a second stayed, still less a third.
 As on my way I went along, mine eye 40
 Encountered one, and on the spot I said :
 " Not for the first time see I this man now,"
 Wherefore I stopped his features to observe, 43
 And with me my kind Leader too remained,
 And gave me leave to fall a little back.
 The one thus lashed thought to conceal himself 46
 By bending low his face ; 'twas no avail ;
 For I began : " Thou, that dost droop thine eyes
 To earth, if these thy features cheat me not, 49
 Venedico Caccianimico art ;
 But what brings thee to pickling such as this ?"
 And he to me : " With no good will I speak ; 52
 But thy clear idiom constraineth me.
 Recalling to my mind the ancient world.
 I was the man, who the fair Ghisola 55
 Did to the marquis for his pleasure bring ;
 However else the scandal may be told.
 Nor I, the only Bolognese, that here 58
 Doth wail ; nay this place is so full of us,
 That not so many tongues now learn between
 Savena and Reno to say : "*Sipa* ;" 61
 And would'st thou proof on evidence demand,
 Call to thy mind our covetous desires."
 As thus he spake, a demon with his thong 64
 Lashed him, and said : " Base pander, hence away ;

Here are no women to be hired for coin."
 Back to my escort's side I made my way ; 67
 And with a few steps afterwards we came
 Where from the bank there jutted out a ridge.
 Nimble enough we mounted to the top, 70
 And turning to the right, o'er a jagged reef,
 We left th' eternal wall of cliffs behind.
 When we had reached a point, where, underneath, 73
 A space is left as passage for the scourged,
 The leader said : " Hold hard, and with thine eye
 Try 'mong these other miscreants to catch 76
 Some faces thou hast not examined yet,
 Seeing their line of road was one with ours."
 From the old bridge above we watched the file, 79
 That came towards us on the other side,
 In the same manner driven by the lash.
 'Gan the good master, ere I asked of him, 82
 " Observe the giant form approaching us,
 That seems not for its pain to shed a tear.
 How royal a presence this he still retains ! 85
 'Tis Jason, who by wit and courage too
 The Colchians left defrauded of the Ram.
 He by the isle of Lemnos passed along, 88
 After the daring women ruthlessly
 Had all their male kind giv'n up to death.
 With signs of love and by his specious words 91
 He there deceived Hypsipyle, the girl,
 Who all her sisters had before deceived.
 With child he left her there in solitude ; 94
 Such sin condemns him to such penalty ;
 And vengeance due requites Medea's wrong.
 With him goes whosoe'er, as he, deceives ; 97
 And of the first crevasse suffice it this
 To know, as well as whom its fangs hold fast."
 Already were we, where the narrow path 100
 Runs on across the second bank, which forms
 The pier from which another arch is thrown.

There heard we people moaning heavily, 103
 I'th' next crevasse, snorting from nose and mouth,
 And with their hands inflicting heavy blows.
 Encrusted were the banks with moisture, which, 106
 Exhaled below, did there condense, and cling
 In substance noisome both to sight and smell.
 So deep the bottom lies, that to look down 109
 There is no place save at the crown of arch,
 Where at its highest point the rock o'erhangs.
 Thither we came, and thence down in the moat 112
 People I saw all stifling in one filth,
 Which from men's privies might have been removed.
 And as I peer down to the depth below, 115
 A head I saw with ordure so o'erlaid,
 That none could say was he lay man or clerk.
 He shrieked at me : " Why stare thus greedily 118
 At me, more than at others as befouled ?"
 And I to him : " If I remember well,
 Thee have I whilom seen with cleanly locks ; 121
 Alessio Interminei of Lucca thou ;
 Therefore I watch thee closer than the rest."
 And he with blows upon his poll replied ; 124
 " Down here those flatteries have plunged me deep,
 With which my tongue was never surfeited."
 And then my leader : " Farther on now try 127
 Thy vision to extend," he said, " that so
 The better with thine eyes thou catch the face
 Of that dishevelled hussy and obscene, 130
 Who yonder rends herself with filthy nail,
 Now crouching down, and now on foot erect.
 Thais the harlot 'tis, who answer made 133
 Unto her lover, when he asked, " do I
 Great thanks deserve from thee ?" " Prodigious ay."
 Herewith our visions may be satisfied." 136

CANTO XIX.

*Eighth Circle—Third Crevasse—Simony—
Pope Nicolas III.*

O SIMON Magus, and thy wretched train,
 Who in your greed for silver and for gold
 Do prostitute the things of God, that ought
 The Brides of Holiness to be, meet 'tis 4
 That now for you the trumpet sound its call,
 Since in the third crevasse your portion is.
 We to the tomb that next in order came 7
 Had climbed, far as the point of rock, which in
 Plumb-line o'erhangs the middle of the moat.
 Wisdom Supreme, how great thy skill, revealed 10
 In heaven, and earth, and in the evil world !
 Thy power how just in Its award to each.
 Along its sides and over all its floor 13
 I saw the dusky rock pierced full of holes,
 All of one size, and each of them was round.
 Not less, nor greater, did they seem to me, 16
 Than those in mine own beautiful St. John,
 Which for the priests in baptism are made.
 'Twas one of such, not many years ago, 19
 I broke to save a child drowning therein ;
 Be this a seal to undeceive all men.
 Forth from the orifice of each the feet 22
 Protruded of a sinner, and his legs
 Far as the calves ; the rest enclosed within.
 The soles of all were both of them afire, 25
 Whereby their joints in such contortions writhed,
 As would have broken withes and plaited bands.
 As with things unctuous the flame is wont 28
 Only to flicker on the outer side,

- So was it there from heel to point of toe.
- “O master, who is it tormented thus, 31
 There writhing more than any of its mates,”
 Said I, “and whom a ruddier flame sucks dry?”
- And he to me: “If willing that adown 34
 That bank, which easier slopes, I carry thee,
 Thou’lt learn from him his story and his sins.”
- And I: “What pleaseth thee, to me is good; 37
 Thou art my lord, and know’st I ne’er depart
 From wish of thine; and know’st what I speak not.”
- Thereon upon the fourth rampart we came; 40
 We turned, and to the left went down far as
 The narrow bottom, which was drilled with holes.
- Nor off his hip did the good master me 43
 Set down, till we had reached the orifice
 Of him, whose shank bespoke such agony.
- “Whoe’er thou art, thus standing upside down, 46
 Unhappy soul, fixed like a stake in th’ earth,”
 Thus my address began, “If able, speak.”
- There like the friar I stood, called in to shrive 49
 The treach’rous murderer, who, now fixèd down,
 Calls him once more, delay from death to gain.
- And he shrieked out: “Already standing here? 52
 Already here, I say, O Boniface?
 By many a year the book of fate’s belied.
- Art thou so soon contended with the pelf, 55
 For which thou didst not fear by fraud to wed
 The Lady Fair, and then dishonour her?”
- I stood like those, who do not understand 58
 Some answer made to them, and think themselves
 Bemocked and at a loss how to reply.
- Then Virgil said “Tell him the truth at once: 61
 Say I am not that man, the man thou think’st.”
 And as directed, such was my reply.
- Whereat the spirit writhed with both his feet, 64
 And then with groans and lamentable voice,
 Ask’d me: “What is’t then thou would’st have of me?”

If to know who I am thou have such care, 67
 That for this purpose thou hast crossed the bank,
 Know that I was with the great mantle clothed ;
 And truly son of the She-Bear I was, 70
 So eager to enrich the cubs, that there
 My wealth, but here myself I stowed away.
 Beneath my head down are the others dragged, 73
 Who before me in simony transgressed,
 Now in the fissures of the rock laid flat.
 And down there I shall one day drop, whene'er 76
 He comes, whom I supposed thee to be,
 When so abruptly I my question put :
 Already longer are my feet in flames, 79
 And I in this inverted posture placed,
 Than planted will he stand with feet afire.
 For after him, with deeds still uglier, 82
 Shall from the west a lawless shepherd come,
 One justly fit to cover him and me.
 A second Jason he ; of such we read 85
 In Maccabees, and as to him his king
 Gave way, e'en so the King of France to this."
 I know not if too foolish I was then 88
 In framing the reply I thus returned :
 " Ah ! tell me now what treasure did our Lord
 Demand at first from Blessed Peter, when 91
 He handed over to his charge the keys ?
 Surely, He asked for nought save, Follow Me ;
 Nor gold nor silver from Matthias asked 94
 Peter and all the rest, when fell by lot
 To him the place lost by the guilty soul.
 Here stay thou then, for thou art punished well ; 97
 Keep safe the money thou didst ill take up,
 Which prompted thine audacity 'gainst Charles ;
 And if it were not that I am withheld 100
 E'en still by rev'rence for the keys supreme,
 Which thou didst carry in the happier life,
 Words would I utter heavier than I speak : 103

For avarice like yours saddens the world,
 Crushing the good and lifting up the bad.
 Shepherds like you were those th' Evangelist 106
 Perceived, when on the waters he beheld
 The woman sit, the paramour of Kings ;
 Who at her birth was crowned with seven heads, 109
 And her credentials in ten horns displayed,
 Long as her virtue pleasèd well her spouse.
 Of gold and silver ye have made a god, 112
 And from idolaters how differ ye,
 Save that they one invoke, and hundreds ye ?
 Ah Constantine ! parent of how great ill, 115
 Not thy conversion, but that dowry was,
 Which from thy hand thè first rich father took ! ”
 And while before him in such strain I sang, 118
 Either in anger, or by conscience stung,
 He with both feet in fierce convulsion writhed.
 Well I believe it pleased my guide to hear 121
 The sound of words expressive of these truths,
 Wheretò he listened with contented smile.
 And so in both his arms he caught me up ; 124
 And when he'd raised me high upon his breast,
 Again he mounted by the way he came ;
 Nor weary was he of this close embrace, 127
 Until he'd reached the summit of the arch,
 Which from the fourth unto the fifth bank leads.
 There did he gently set his burthen down, 130
 Gently by reason of the rugged steep,
 Where e'en a goat had found the passage hard :
 Thence a broad valley opened to my view. 133

CANTO XX.

*Eighth Circle—Fourth Crevasse—Diviners—Amphiaräus—
Tiresias—Aruns—Manto—Eurypylus—Michael Scott.*

OF a new punishment my verse must speak,
 And furnish matter for the twentieth book
 Of the first lay, which tells of the submerged.

Already had I set myself to gaze 4
 With all my force into the open depth,
 Which in the tears of agony was steeped ;

And round the curve of the vast valley saw, 7
 Weeping in silence, people come at pace,
 At which in this world litanies proceed.

And as mine eyes fell to still lower depths, 10
 Each seemed to be distorted wondrously
 Between the chin and where the chest begins :

For to the loins the face was twisted round, 13
 And backward only needs could they advance,
 Because in front all sight was ta'en away.

Perchance already in paralysis 16
 Some may have been wholly distorted thus,
 But such I have not seen, nor think there be.

So may God grant thee, Reader, to collect 19
 Fruit from thy reading, think within thyself,
 How an unmoistened face I could retain,

When our own image close to me I saw 22
 So twisted round, that from their eyes the tears
 Ran down the spine and bathed the hinder parts.

I wept indeed, as 'gainst a point I leaned 25
 Of the hard rock, so that my escort said :
 " Art thou too one among the other fools ?

Here piety revives, when pity dies. 28
 For who can be more impious than the man,

Whom God's just judgments stir to sympathy ?
 Raise, raise thy head, and see the man for whom 31
 Earth opened once before the Thebans' eyes,
 And with one shout they cried : Where dost thou fall,
 Amphiaräus ? why the battle leave ?" 34
 Yet stayed he not his headlong rush below,
 Till Minos he had reached, who all arrests.
 See, of his shoulders he hath made a breast ; 37
 Because he fain would see too far ahead,
 Backward he looks ; advance is retrograde.
 Tiresias see, who his appearance changed. 40
 When for a man's a woman's form he took,
 Transformed entirely in his every limb ;
 And needed after that he first should smite 43
 The pair of twisted serpents with his rod,
 Ere plumes of manly sex he could resume.
 His belly Aruns with his back confronts, 46
 Who on the Luni hills, where now are fields,
 Tilled by the Carrarese that dwells below,
 Mid the white marbles occupied a cave, 49
 From whence, surveying sea and stars alike,
 His vision swept in unimpeded range.
 And she, who with her tresses flowing down 52
 Hides from thy sight her breasts, and hath her form
 On th' other side veiled 'neath a robe of hair,
 Was Manto, who, first searching many lands, 55
 At last there settled, where myself was born ;
 Wherefore I would thou hear me yet awhile.
 When from this life her father passed away, 58
 And Bacchus' city into bondage came,
 She for a long time roamed about the world.
 Up in fair Italy there lies a lake, 61
 Beneath the Alp that locks Germania in,
 Above the Tyrolese, Benaco named.
 'Tween Garda and the Val Camonica 64
 More than a thousand springs water, I trow,
 Mount Apennine, and in that lake collect.

- Midway a spot there is, where bishop from 67
 Brescia, Verona, Trent a blessing might
 Pronounce, if on his way he take that road.
- And where the shore around it lowest falls, 70
 Sits Peschiera, fortress fair and strong,
 Confronting Brescia, and the Bergamasks.
- There finds an outlet all such water as 73
 Benaco cannot in his bosom hold,
 And flows below, a river through green fields.
- Soon as the current on its course makes head, 76
 No more Benaco, Mincio it is called,
 Far as Governo, where it joins the Po.
- Nor runs it far, ere it a level finds, 79
 O'er which it spreads, and forms a swampy pool,
 That doth in summer breathe unwholesome airs.
- As thereby passed the harsh, ungenial maid. 82
 Midway across the marsh she spied a spot,
 A barren waste, void of inhabitants ;
- There to escape all human intercourse, 85
 She halted with her slaves to ply her arts,
 There lived, and there she left her empty corse.
- Men afterwards from scattered points around 88
 Collected in this place, as one secure,
 By reason of the swamps on every side.
- They built the city over her dead bones, 91
 And after her, who first chose out the place,
 They called it Mantua without augur's aid.
- Already dwelt in it a numerous race, 94
 Or ever Casalodi's folly had
 Been played upon by Pinamonte's guile.
- So I apprise thee, if thou ever hear 97
 My native home had other origin,
 That never can a lie gainsay the truth."
- "Master," said I, "these arguments of thine 100
 So cogent are, and so constrain my faith,
 That other would with me be but spent coals.
- But tell me of these people passing by, 103

If any thou observe of special note ;
For only unto such my mind responds.
He said to me : " He yonder, from whose cheek 106
The beard o'er his brown'd shoulders floweth down,
What time Greece was of sons so far bereft,
That scarce in cradle was a manchild found, 109
Was augur, and with Chalcas fixed the hour
At Aulis to let slip the cable first.
Eurypylus his name, and thus of him 112
In one place sings my own high tragedy ;
This thou know'st well, thou, who dost know it all.
The other, so contracted in the flank, 115
Was Michael Scott, who in good sooth knew how
To play the trick of a magician's fraud.
Guido Bonatti see ; Asdente see, 118
Who now to leather and to twine would fain
Have stuck, but his repentance comes too late.
The wretched women see, who witches turned, 121
And needle, spool and spindle cast away
To work black arts with images and herbs.
But onward now, for with his thorns doth Cain 124
Now touch the confine of both hemispheres,
And below Seville dips into the wave,
And only yesternight the moon was full, 127
As thou should'st well recall, for no ill friend
Was she ofttimes to thee in the dark wood."
So spake he to me, as the while we moved. 130

CANTO XXI.

*The Eighth Circle—Fifth Crevasse—Swindlers and Rogues—
A Magistrate of Lucca—A Constabulary of Demons—
A Comedy of Hell.*

DISCOURSING upon other things whereof
 My Comedy cares not to sing, we thus [height.
 From bridge to bridge advanced and reached the
 Where paused we to observe the next crevasse 4
 Of the Sin pouches, and their vain laments.
 And this I saw in wondrous darkness wrapped.
 As the Venetians in their arsenal 7
 In winter time boil the tenacious pitch
 Their unsound shipping to repair, which they
 Dare not send out to sea; or in its stead 10
 A new ship one constructs, while one recaulks
 The ribs of that which many a trip has made,
 One hammering forward, and another aft; 13
 And fashion some the oars, or twine the shrouds,
 And others patch the mizzen or mainsail;
 So not by fire, but power of art Divine, 16
 There boiled below a pitch-like substance thick,
 That, as with glue, besmeared the banks all round.
 This I beheld, but nothing else therein 19
 Save bubbles, which the boiling brought to top,
 And watched the whole swell up, contract and sink.
 While I was gazing hard down on the depth, 22
 My Leader with the cry "Beware, Beware,"
 Dragged me, from where I stood, up to himself.
 I turned me then as one who hastes to catch 25
 A sight of what he rather would escape,
 Whom sudden fear leaves in bewilderment;
 Who, while he looks, is hurrying to begone. 28

For a black devil I behind us saw
 Running above us o'er the bridge of rock.
 Ah me! how savage in aspect was he! 31
 And in his gestures no less fierce he seemed,
 With wings outspread, and nimble on his feet:
 His shoulder, high and pointed sharp, was with 34
 A sinner charged, whose either haunch he held,
 Gripped tightly by the tendons of the feet.
 "Ho! Bloodyclaws," he cried, "that keep our bridge, 37
 One of St. Zita's elders hither comes;
 Send him well under, for I now go back
 To that place, which is full of such, where, save 40
 Bonturo, all are venal knaves and rogues.
 Where for a penny yes will change to no."
 He tossed him down, and over the hard rock 43
 Himself returned, and ne'er was mastiff slipp'd
 At greater speed upon a robber's track.
 Down sank the wretch, and rose all doubled up! 46
 The demons, under cover of the bridge,
 Yelled out: "No Santo Volto for thee here;
 Folks swim not here as in the Serchio; 49
 So, an' thou would'st escape our grappling-hook,
 Don't let thyself appear above the pitch."
 Then tearing him with more than hundred rakes, 52
 "Here under cover," said they, "thou must dance,
 And so, if able, filch thy stealthy gains."
 Just so the cooks unto their scullions give 55
 Orders within the cauldron to keep down
 The flesh with prongs, lest to the top it float.
 Said the good Master: "That it may not be 58
 Observed, that thou art here, crouch down behind
 Some jutting rock, which may a screen afford;
 And for offence that may to me occur, 61
 Be not alarmed; I understand it all;
 In such a scuffle have I been before"
 O'er the bridge head then went he on his way; 64
 And when upon the sixth bank he arrived,

Need had he then a steadfast front to show. 67
 With all the fury and the storm of rage
 With which dogs rush upon a beggarman,
 Who, as he halts, begins his tale of want,
 So rushed they from beneath the little bridge, 70
 And turned against him all their grappling hooks ;
 But shouted he : " Let none be mischievous ;
 Ere with your hooks ye make attack on me, 73
 Let one of you advance to hear my words ;
 And then advise ye how ye use your forks."

They all cried out : " Tailstinger, now go thou : " 76
 Whereon one moved ; steady the rest remained ;
 Said he, as he came up : " What use is this " ?
 " Tailstinger, dost thou think thou'dst see me here 79
 Arrived," said then my master, " thus far safe,
 Despite the violence of your rude attacks,
 Save by the Will Divine and favouring fate ? 82
 For me make way ; in heaven 'tis willed that I
 Should to another show this savage road."

Then in his pride was he crest-fallen so, 85
 That to his feet forthwith down dropped his prong ;
 And to the rest he said : " No blows just yet."

To me my Guide called out : " Thou, who dost sit 88
 Crouching amid the juttings of the bridge,
 Rejoin me now in full security."

At once I rose and quickly came to him ; 91
 And in a line the devils all advanced,
 So that I feared they would the compact break.

In like alarm I saw the soldiers once 94
 Forth from Caprona coming under bond,
 Finding themselves among so many foes.

With my whole person I drew closely to 97
 My Leader's side, nor did I take mine eyes
 From off the looks which boded me no good.

They sloped their prongs ; and, " Shall I touch him up 100
 Over the crupper," said they 'mong themselves.
 " Ay, Ay, let fly at him," they answered all.

- But then the demon, who my Leader held 103
 In parley with him, turned him sharply round.
 And said : " Now quiet, Bullybrawl, keep still."
 And then to us : " Farther advance across 106
 This rock there cannot be, for the sixth arch
 In utter ruin at the bottom lies.
 But an it please ye forward still to go, 109
 Then up along this causeway lies your path,
 When soon another reef will put you o'er.
 But yesterday later five hours than this, 112
 A thousand years, two hundred, sixty-six
 Were told in full, since broken was this road.
 Thither I send these pursuivants of mine 115
 To see who may be snuffing fresher air.
 Go ye with them ; not spiteful will they be.
 Wingflapper to the front and Frostyfoot," 118
 So he began to call, " Uglydog next,
 And Frizzlybeard, be captain of the ten.
 Step forward Gorymoor and Dragonsnout, 121
 Dogskinner and Hogbristle with thy tusks,
 Cockchafer and mad Ruddyface the last.
 All round the seething glue make careful search ! 124
 Convey these safely to the other reef,
 Which all unbroken spans the dens beneath."
 " Master, woe's me ; what is it I behold ?" 127
 Said I, " O without escort let us go,
 For I ask none, if thou but know the way.
 If thou art now quick to observe as erst, 130
 Dost thou not see them grimly grind their teeth,
 And threaten with their frowns our injury."
 And he to me : " I would not have thee fear : 133
 Leave them to grind their teeth, as pleaseth them ;
 Such signs they mean for wretches boiling there."
 Along the left embankment they wheeled round, 136
 But first each one, with tongue squeezed tight between
 The teeth, thus to his Leader gave a sign,
 And from the rear with trumpet he replied. 139

CANTO XXII.

*Eighth Circle—Fifth Crevasse—Swindlers and Rogues—
Ciampolo of Navarre—Fra Gomita—Michael Zanche—
A Demon Scuffle.*

I HAVE ere now seen Cavalry strike camp,
 Begin the charge, or in full line deploy,
 Or in retreat sometimes e'en quicken pace ;
 Scouts have I seen scouring across your plains, 4
 Ye Aretines ; seen foragers go forth,
 Tournaments fought, and tiltings in the joust,
 To sound of trumpets, and anon of bells, 7
 With drums and signals from the battlements,
 And fashions of our own and foreign lands,
 But ne'er with such strange bagpipes have I seen 10
 Or horse or foot in motion set, as there,
 Nor ship at signal from the shore or star.
 On with the demon ten we made our way ; 13
 Ah me ! what savage comrades ! but in church
 With saints—in tavern with the revellers !
 Yet my attention on the pitch was fixed 16
 To see the whole condition of the pool,
 And of the people that in it were boiled.
 As do the dolphins, when with archèd backs 19
 To sailors they a sign of warning give,
 Who then bethink them to secure their boat,
 So sometimes to alleviate his pain 22
 Might there a sinner show his back, and then
 Quick as the lightning draw it in again ;
 And as in ditches by the water's edge 25
 The frogs will range with but their noses out,
 And thus conceal their feet and larger parts,
 E'en so on all sides were the sinners ranged ; 28

- But as towards them Frizzlybeard approached,
 Beneath the bubbles quick they darted in.
- And one I saw, and shudders still my heart, 31
 Who waited, e'en as it might happen that
 One frog remains, while dives another down.
- Dogskinner then, who nearest was to him, 34
 Caught with his hook the hair besmeared with pitch,
 And held him like an otter up to view :
- I had already learned the names of all, 37
 For I had noted them as they were picked,
 And after marked how each addressed his mate.
- "Now, Ruddyface, be sure that in his back 40
 Thou fix thy claws, and strip him of his skin ;"
 So shouted all the accursèd fiends at once.
- And I : "O Master if thou can, by all means do 43
 Find out who this unlucky wight may be,
 That thus has fallen into adverse hands."
- My Leader to his side drew near, and asked, 46
 From whence he came : to him the other said :
 "My birthplace was the kingdom of Navarre."
- My mother placed me servant to a lord, 49
 For by a ribald had she me conceived,
 Who all his substance and himself destroyed.
- Domestic to good King Tybalt then I was ; 52
 To bribery there and fraud I gave myself,
 For which in this stew now I give account."
- Hogbristle then, from out whose mouth there thrust, 55
 On each side one, a pair of hoglike tusks,
 Let him feel well how one of these could rend.
- The mouse had fallen among cruel cats ; 58
 But in his arms him Frizzlybeard snatched up :
 "Stand off," he said, "long as he's in my grip ;"
- And to my Master he then turned his face : 61
 "Ask him again," he said, "if more thou'dst learn,
 Before another gives him his dispatch."
- My Leader then : "Among thy fellows here 64
 In guilt, know'st thou if any Latin be

Beneath the pitch?" And he: "But now I left
 One, who erewhile was living near those parts. 67
 And would I were with him well covered up,
 So should I fear neither their hooks nor claws!"
 And Gorymoor: "Too long have we been kept," 70
 He said, and with a prong he caught his arm,
 And tore it so, he carried off a slice.
 And Dragonsnout wished too to give a tweak 73
 Down on the legs, but the decurion
 With angry glance turned round upon them all:
 And when they had somewhat been pacified, 76
 From him, who still was looking at his gash,
 My Leader promptly asked without delay:
 "Who was the man, that in an evil hour 79
 Thou say'st thou left to land thee on this shore?"
 And answered he: "Friar Gomita 'twas;
 He of Gallura, vessel of all fraud, 82
 Who kept his master's enemies in hand,
 And so dealt with them that they bless him all.
 He took their coin, and let them slip away; 85
 Such his expression, and in other ways
 He was no petty jobber, but a prince.
 Michael Zanche, of Logodoro lord, 88
 Is his companion, and their tongues ne'er tire
 While of Sardinia they together talk.
 Ah me! see there another grinds his teeth: 91
 More would I say, but fear me now that he
 His preparation makes to scratch my skin."
 Then said th' Arch-Provost, to Cockchafer turned, 94
 Who rolled his eyes as if about to strike,
 "Bird of ill omen, yonder stand aside."
 "If ye do wish to see, and also hear," 97
 Thereon resumed the terror stricken wretch,
 "Tuscans or Lombards, I'll make some appear;
 But let the Bloodyclaws draw off a space, 100
 That those may fear no chastisement from them;
 And I here seated on this very spot,

- For one that I am, will make seven come,
 Soon as I whistle, which is here our use,
 When one of us makes bold to get outside." 103
- At these words, Uglydog pricked up his ears,
 Shaking his head and said: "Hark at the trick,
 His own device for jumping in again!" 106
- And he thereon from his great store of frauds
 Replied: "Too tricksome verily I am,
 When for my friends I scheme their greater woe." 109
- Wingflapper then could not refrain, but said,
 At variance with the rest, "If now thou stoop,
 I will not come at gallop in thy rear,
 But o'er thee 'bove the pitch I'll flap my wings:
 Leave we the hill, and make its ridge a screen;
 We'll see can'st thou alone outwit us all." 112
- A novel sport, O Reader, now thou'lt hear!
 Each turned his face to'ward the other side,
 He first, who for the plan was least disposed. 115
- The Navarrese chose well his time; with feet
 Firm planted on the ground, he in a trice
 Sprang forward, and eluded thus their schemes. 121
- They, one and all, were with vexation galled,
 But he the most, who the mishap had caused,
 And up he started with a cry "Thou'rt caught." 124
- But no avail: the wings ill matched 'gainst fear,
 Made little way. Down went the one below,
 The other raised his breast in upright flight. 127
- Not with more rapid plunge the duck, when stoops
 The falcon from above, dives down below,
 While up the latter mounts, ruffled and spent. 130
- But Frostyfoot in fury at the trick
 Kept after him on wing, not sorry he
 In this escape to find pretext to fight;
 And as the broker disappeared from view,
 On his own comrade he his talons turned,
 And o'er the pool grappled the two in strife. 133
- The other proved a true bred sparrow hawk, 136
- The other proved a true bred sparrow hawk, 139

And gripped him tight, and both together rolled
Into the middle of the boiling pool.
A sudden mediator was the heat ; 142
But to rise up again they had no means,
So well besmeared and clogged their pinions were.
Then Frizzlybeard chafing like all the rest, 145
Sent four of them on wing to th' other side,
All with their rakes, and quick enough they went,
This way and that to their appointed posts : 148
Their hooks they stretched out to the pitch-bound pair,
Who through their skins were now well nigh par-boiled:
And of them in this plight we took our leave. 151

CANTO XXIII.

*Eighth Circle—Sixth Crevasse—Hypocrites—Frati Godenti—
Caiaphas—Fra Catalano.*

SILENT, alone, and without escort now,
 One in the front and one behind we went,
 As Minor Friars travel on the road ;
 The while, by reason of the recent fray, 4
 On Æsops' fable were my thoughts engaged,
 Wherein he tells the tale of frog and mouse.
 For "Mo" and "Issa" mean as much the same 7
 As these two cases are coincident,
 If first and last we well compare them both.
 And as from one thought will another spring, 10
 So out of this another had its birth,
 Whereby my first fear in me double grew.
 My thought was this: these demons have through us 13
 Been flouted, and with hurt and ridicule
 So great, that they, I deem, are sorely vexed.
 If with their evil will wrath be conjoined, 16
 In mood more savage they will follow us,
 Than greyhound seizing on the leveret.
 Already every hair I felt on end 19
 With fear; and said, as halting I looked back,
 "Master, if speedily thou do not hide
 Thyself and me, I very greatly dread 22
 The Bloodyclaws: we have them in our rear;
 I fancy I can hear them even now."
 And he replied: "Were I of leaded glass, 25
 Thine outward form I could not sooner catch,
 Than of thine inner mind I am possessed.
 E'en now thy thoughts run evenly with mine, 28
 In action and resemblance uniform,
 So that from both one counsel I have formed.

If on the right this steep should so incline, 31
That to the next crevasse we can descend,
We shall escape the chase thy fancy fears.”
His plan he had not yet set forth in full, 34
When on extended wings I saw them come,
And not far off, with will to capture us.
In haste my Leader caught me up, e'en as 37
A mother, who awakened by their roar,
Sees, close upon her, flames of blazing fire,
Catches her boy, and flies so quickly off, 40
Of him so much more careful than of self,
That e'en her smock she barely stays to don.
And from the summit of the rugged bank, 43
Supine he slid adown the hanging rock,
Which on one side shuts in the next crevasse.
So swiftly never stream through conduit ran 46
To turn the wheel of any mill on land,
Where nearest to the paddles it pours in,
As did my master o'er that boundary edge, 49
Bearing me with him to his bosom clasped,
Not as companion, but his very son.
Scarce with his feet had he now touched the bed 52
Of depth below, when they the summit reached
Just overhead, but nought had he to fear ;
For Providence on high, Who willed that they 55
In the fifth pit His ministers should be,
Withdraws from all the power of quitting it.
People we found down there disguised with paint, 58
Who at a creeping pace pursued their round,
Seeming in tears both tired and overcome.
Mantles they wore with large hoods drawn down low 61
Before their eyes, and cut in fashion such
As those that in Cologne are made for monks.
Gilded outside were these, dazzling to see, 64
But underneath of lead, and of a weight,
That Frederick's cowl had seemed to them of straw.
And oh ! the eternal burthen of that cloak ! 67

We, as before, turned with them to the left,
 Intent to hear their melancholy plaint.
 But by the weight they bore, these weary folk 70
 So slowly came, that at our every step
 We found ourselves in a new company.
 So to my Guide I said: "Try now to find 73
 Some one, well known by name or by his deeds,
 And as thou goest, cast thine eyes around."
 And one that understood the Tuscan speech, 76
 Cried out behind us: "Stay awhile your feet,
 Ye who run thus athwart the dusky air;
 Perchance thou'lt have from me what thou dost seek." 79
 Thereon my Guide turned round, and "Wait," to me
 He said, "and by his pace then measure thine."
 I stopped; and two I saw display in look 82
 A mind to get to me with all their speed,
 But by their load and the strait path were slow.
 When they came up, askance they fixed their eyes 85
 Long time on me, but uttered not a word;
 Then to themselves they turned, and spoke aside:
 "By movement of the throat that man's alive; 88
 And by what license, if they both are dead,
 Do they pass on without the heavy cloak?"
 To me they said then: "Tuscan, who art come 91
 Unto the college of sad hypocrites,
 Disdain not to declare who thou may'st be."
 And I to them: "Born was I and grew up 94
 In the great City on fair Arno's stream,
 And bear the body I have ever had.
 But who are ye, from whom, so far as I 97
 Can see, such sorrow down your cheeks distils?
 And what the penalty that sparkles thus?"
 And one replied to me: "These orange cloaks 100
 Are made of lead; so heavily they weigh,
 They make the balances thus harshly creak.
 We Joyous Brothers were, and Bolognese, 103
 I Catalano, he Loderingo named,

Whom, both of us at once, your City chose,
 Where commonly but one elected is, 106
 To keep the peace; and were in office such
 As round Gardingo may be seen to-day.”
 “Fрати,” ’gan I, “your sins,” but said no more; 109
 For on mine eyes there fell a sight, which showed
 One crucified with three stakes in the ground,
 Who, when he saw me, writhed in every limb, 112
 Breathing out heavy sighs into his beard:
 And Catalan, the friar, who noted this,
 Told me: “The man thou seest thus transfixed, 115
 Counsell’d the Pharisees that expedient ’twere
 That one should suffer for the nation’s sake.
 Naked he lies, outstretched across the road, 118
 As thou dost see, and needs must he first feel
 The weight of each that passes over him.
 And his wife’s father likewise in this ditch 121
 Is stretched with all who in that council sat,
 Which to the Jews proved but the seed of woe.”
 Then saw I Virgil in astonishment 124
 Gaze on the man extended on the cross,
 Thus shamefully, in exile evermore.
 And to the Friar he next addressed himself: 127
 “Be pleased, if ’tis allowed, to tell us now
 If to the right some outlet there may lie,
 Whereby we both may make our way outside, 130
 Without constraining the black angels’ aid
 To extricate us from this deep defile.”
 He answered him: “Much nearer than you hope, 133
 A reef runs from the great encircling cliff,
 And all these sad crevasses bridges o’er;
 Save that here shatter’d, it no passage gives; 136
 Yet o’er the ruins you can clamber, which
 Slope down the side, and form at base a pile.”
 The Leader stood awhile with head bent down; 139
 Then said: “He told us wrong what we required,
 Who yonder claws the sinner with his hook.”

- And then the Friar: "'Twas in Bologna said
The devil's sins are many, and 'mong them
Liar is he, and father too of lies." 142
- At once with mighty strides my Guide moved on,
Perturb'd somewhat by anger in his look. 145
- The sufferers 'neath their load I left behind,
Treading in prints of the belovèd feet. 148

CANTO XXIV.

Eighth Circle—Seventh Crevasse—Robbers—Vanni Fucci.

WHILE still the year is young, what time the sun
 Warmeth his locks beneath Aquarius,
 And long nights now are moving to the south,
 When on the ground the hoar frost would portray 4
 The outline of her whiter sister's face,
 Though brief the endurance of her pencil's point :
 The husbandman, whose fodder 'gins to fail, 7
 Rises, looks out, and sees the countryside
 Whiten'd all round, and smiting on his thigh,
 Returns indoors, and grumbles up and down, 10
 Like the poor wretch that knows not what to do ;
 Then looks again, and in his budget finds
 Fresh hope, seeing the world has changed its face 13
 Within the hour, and straightway takes his staff,
 And forth to the pasture drives his little flock :
 So did the Master strike me with dismay, 16
 When I beheld his much disturbèd brow,
 While to my wound—as soon the plaster came.
 For when we reached the ruins of the bridge, 19
 My Guide turned toward me with the same sweet look
 That at the mountain foot I first beheld.
 Brief counsel with himself he took ; anon 22
 The ruins carefully surveyed, and then
 His arms he opened wide, and me embraced ;
 And like the man who works, and calculates, 25
 And ever seems in thought to look ahead,
 So, as he raised me upward toward the top
 Of one great block, his eye another caught. 28
 “ Lay hold of yonder next,” he said ; “ but first
 Make trial if it can support thy weight.”

- No road was this for any clad in cope ; 31
 For scarce could we, light as he was, and I,
 Pushed upward, make from point to point our way.
 And had not here the slope of this precinct 34
 Been shorter much than on the other side,
 I say not he, but I had been o'ercome.
 But as Sinpouches with continuous slope 37
 Sinks to the entrance of the lowest pit,
 Each hollow in position is so placed,
 That one bank rises and the other falls. 40
 At length we reached the summit at the point,
 From which the last stone had been broken off.
 My breath from out my lungs was so drained off, 43
 When I was up, no farther could I go,
 But rather on arrival sat me down.
 "Now must thou needs throw off all slothfulness," 46
 Said then the Master ; "on a bed of down,
 Or under coverlets, no man wins fame ;
 Withouten which whoso doth spend his life, 49
 Leaves of himself on earth such trace behind,
 As smoke in air, and on the water foam.
 Then raise thee to thy feet ; surmount fatigue 52
 With spirit such as every battle wins,
 If it succumb not to the weight of flesh.
 A longer ladder thine ascent awaits : 55
 Those yonder to have left sufficeth not.
 My meaning if thou catch, use it for good."
 Then I arose in form as if equipped 58
 With stock of breath that I by no means felt ;
 "Go on," I said ; "I'm stout and resolute."
 Up o'er the reef we set forth on our way, 61
 Which rugged was, narrow and difficult,
 And steeper far than was the one before :
 Talking I went, my weariness to hide ; 64
 And from the next crevasse came forth a voice,
 Broken in speech and inarticulate.
 I know not what it said, although I'd reached 67

The keystone of the arch that crosses there :
 But he who spake, seem'd as if stirred in wrath.
 Downward I'd bent the while ; but living eyes 70
 Might such obscurity ne'er penetrate.
 Therefore I said : " Try, Master, and make for
 The other bank, and from this wall descend, 73
 For as I hear, and nothing understand,
 So I look down, and nothing can discern."
 " No answer I return,' he said, " save that 76
 I do thy will ; a just demand should aye
 Be followed by prompt action silently."
 We from the bridge went down hard by the head, 79
 Where with the eighth rampart it doth unite,
 And open there lay the crevasse in view.
 Within I saw in mass most horrible 82
 Serpents entwined, and so diverse in form,
 They even now in memory chill my blood.
 No more may Libya of her sands make boast ; 85
 For if they swarm with hydras, vipers too,
 And amphisbænas, asps and rattlesnakes,
 Ne'er did they show reptiles so pestilent, 88
 And fierce, with Ethiopia to boot,
 Nor all the land along the Red Sea shore.
 Amid this savage and most dismal swarm 91^R
 Were people running, naked, terrified,
 No hope of hiding place, nor heliotrope.
 Upon their backs their hands were bound with snakes ; 94
 These with the head and tail pierced through the loins,
 And in the front were twisted into knots.
 And lo ! on one, who stood upon our side, 97
 Outrushed a serpent, and transfix'd him there,
 Where to the shoulders is the neck attached.
 Nor e'er was *I* or *O* so quickly writ, 100
 As he caught fire and burned ; and as he fell
 A heap of ashes needs must he become.
 When on the ground he wholly was consumed, 103
 His dust all of itself together came,

And he at once returned to his own form.
 E'en so by sages great it is confessed 106
 The Phœnix dies, and then is born again,
 As it approaches the five hundredth year.
 Nor blade nor grain doth it in lifetime eat, 109
 But tears of incense and amomum juice ;
 And myrrh and spikenard are its shroud at last.
 And as is one who falls, and knows not how, 112
 By demon force that drags him to the ground,
 Or some obstruction that may seize a man,
 Who when he rises, gazes all around, 115
 Wholly bewildered by the great distress
 He had endured, and sighs, as he looks up,
 Such was that sinner after he arose. 118
 Almighty God ! Thy Power how sternly just,
 Which in its Vengeance deals such strokes as these ! 121
 My Leader asked him then, who once he was ;
 And he replied : " From Tuscany I fell
 But short while since into this cruel gulf.
 A brutish, not a human life pleased me, 124
 Mule as I was I Vanni Fucci am,
 A beast ; Pistoia was my fitting den."
 And to my Leader I : " Bid him not budge ; 127
 And ask what crime it was that sent him here ;
 For him I've seen, a man of wrath and blood."
 The sinner understood, made no pretence, 130
 But straight on me he fixed his thought and face ;
 And with a melancholy shame suffused,
 He said : " More painful 'tis that thou'st found me 133
 In misery, wherein thou seest me here,
 Than what I felt, when torn from former life.
 What thou demandest I may not refuse : 136
 My place is thus deep down because I once
 Stole from the Sacristy its precious things,
 And this upon another falsely laid. 139
 But that this sight may never make thee glad,
 If from these haunts of gloom thou e'er emerge,

Ope to my message now thine ears, and hear : 142
Pistoia first thins out from her the Black ;
Florence adopts new men, reforms her laws :
From Val di Magra Mars a vapour draws, 145
Which comes envelopèd in turbid clouds,
And amid tempest fiercely raging o'er
Piceno's plain a battle shall be fought : 148
Forth from the mist the sudden vapour bursts,
And every White by it is smitten down.
And this I've said to gall thee all the more." 151

CANTO XXV.

*Eighth Circle—Seventh Crevasse—Robbers—Cacus—
Five Robbers of Florence and their Transmutations.*

THE robber, ending thus his words, upraised
 Both fists, and with the foulest gestures yelled :
 “ Take that, O God, which I square up at Thee.”
 From that day unto this have serpents been 4
 To me as friends, for round his neck coiled one,
 As if 'twould say : “ I will thou speak no more.”
 Another on the arms doubled his bonds, 7
 Knotting itself in front upon his breast,
 So that with them he could not even twitch.
 Pistoia, ah Pistoia ! why no law 10
 That thou to ashes turn and cease to be,
 When now thy sons in sin outrun their sires ?
 Through all the circles of infernal gloom 13
 No spirit saw I of such pride toward God ;
 Not him who fell down from the walls of Thebes.
 So swift he fled, he spake no other word : 16
 And I beheld a furious Centaur come,
 Shouting aloud . “ Where is the savage, where ” ?
 I do not think Maremma's self contains 19
 So many snakes as on his loins he bore,
 Far as the point where 'gins our human form.
 Upon his shoulders just behind the nape 22
 There lay a dragon with extended wings,
 Which sets on fire whome'er it haps to meet.
 To me my Master said : “ Cacus is this, 25
 Who underneath the rock of Aventine
 Made oftentimes the place a pool of blood.
 Not with his comrades on one path goes he, 28
 By reason of the stealthy theft he made

Of the great herd, that near his quarters lay ;
 For which his double dealings were cut short 31
 'Neath club of Hercules, who dealt perchance
 Some hundred blows of which he felt not ten.
 While thus he spake, lo ! he had passed us by ; 34
 And spirits three had risen at our feet,
 Of whom my guide and I were not aware,
 Until they shouted to us : " Who are ye ? " 37
 Whereon our further converse we broke off,
 And then attended only unto them.
 I knew them not, but so it followed now, 40
 As oft will follow by an accident,
 That one had need to drop another's name,
 Saying : " Where has Cianfa stopped behind ? " 43
 Whereat, that on the watch my Guide should stand,
 I raised my finger up from chin to nose.
 If Reader, thou be slow now to believe 46
 What I shall tell, will it no wonder be,
 For I, who saw it, scarce allow it now.
 While I towards them kept my eyebrows raised, 49
 Behold a serpent with six feet springs up
 In front of one, and fastens on him close.
 Its middle feet it fixed upon his paunch, 52
 And with the foremost held him by the arms,
 And then in both cheeks set at once his teeth.
 The hinder feet it stretched out o'er its thighs, 55
 And thrusting 'tween the two its tail, it drew
 It high upon the back across the loins.
 Never more tightly did the ivy grip 58
 The trunk of tree, than did this horrid beast
 Its limbs upon the other intertwine.
 Then each the other penetrating, like 61
 Hot wax, their several colours blent in one,
 And neither seemed what it had been before ;
 Just as with paper, ere it catches fire, 64
 A brownish tint creeps on and over it,
 And 'tis not yet full black, but the white dies.

- The other two looked on, and each cried out : 67
 "Agnello, ah what change is this we see !
 Lo ! even now thou art nor two nor one."
 Already two heads had in one conjoined, 70
 And doubled features mingled in one face,
 Common to both, wherein the two were lost.
 The four lines of their joints were merged in two : 73
 The thighs and legs, the belly with the chest
 Became such limbs as ne'er were seen before.
 All trace of previous aspect disappeared : 76
 It seemed the form of two, and yet of none ;
 Distorted thus it slowly moved away.
 As when a lizard 'neath the burning scourge 79
 Of dogday heat, shifting from hedge to hedge,
 Like lightning seems to flash across the way,
 Such a small reptile seemed, which all afire, 82
 Made for the bellies of the other two,
 Livid and black as any peppercorn.
 And at that part wherein man first receives 85
 His aliment, it one of them transfixed,
 Then down it dropped, stretched out in front of him :
 The one transfixed in silence stared at it ; 88
 His feet unmoved, half drowsily he yawned,
 As though by sleep or fever he were caught.
 He on the serpent gazed, and it on him : 91
 One through the wound, the other from the mouth
 Poured out dense smoke in intermingling clouds.
 Silent be Lucan now, where he tells of 94
 Wretched Sabellus and Nassidius,
 And wait to hear what now my bow shoots forth.
 Of Cadmus and of Arethusa must 97
 Ovid be silent ; if in fable he
 Change one to serpent and to fountain one,
 I grudge it not : two natures, front to front, 100
 He ne'er so metamorphosed, that they both
 Were ready to exchange their substances.
 Such correspondence 'tween them wrought by rule, 103

- That as the serpent's tail was cleft fork-like,
 The wounded ghost's two feet grew into one ;
 The legs and thighs together did cohere 106
 In fashion such, that speedily they left
 No trace of their conjunction visible.
 The cloven tail withal assumed the form 109
 The other lost, and while its skin at once
 Grew soft, the other's hardened into scales.
 I saw the arms up through the armpits drawn ; 112
 The two feet of the reptile, which were short,
 Lengthened inversely, as the others shrank.
 The hinder feet next, twisted into one, 115
 Became the part which men conceal from view ;
 And with the wretch that part split into two.
 The while the smoke forms for them both a veil 118
 Of colour new to each, the hair upon
 The one sprouts forth, and off the other peels ;
 The one stood up ; prostrate the other fell ; 121
 The savage glare unaltered in their eyes,
 Underneath which their muzzles each exchanged.
 He who stood up, his toward the temples drew ; 124
 And from excess of swollen substance there
 The ears protruded from the unfurnished cheeks.
 So much as ran not back and still remained, 127
 Of that remainder gave the face a nose,
 And made the thicker lips that were required.
 He who lay prostrate, pushes forth a snout, 130
 And back into his head withdraws his ears,
 As with its horns a snail is wont to do ;
 The tongue, which was before entire, and apt 133
 To speak, divides ; and with the other one
 The forkèd fangs close up ; smoke ceaseth now.
 The soul that had become a brute takes flight, 136
 And through the valley hissing speeds its way ;
 The other splutters, calling after it.
 His new made shoulders then he turned on it, 139
 And to the other said : " Let Buoso run,

As whilom I, on all fours 'long the road."
The seventh hold thus its ballast did I see 142
Shift and reshift: in my excuse I plead
These marvels, if my pen have run afield.
And though mine eyes were in no small degree 145
Confused, and all my mind bewildered,
Those spirits could not part so secretly
That Puccio Sciancato I should miss: 148
And of the three, who first in company
Appeared, he only had not been transformed.
The other one, Gaville, dost thou lament. 151

CANTO XXVI.

*Eighth Circle—Eighth Crevasse—Fraudulent Counsellors.
Ulysses and Diomedes—Voyages and death of Ulysses.*

EXULT Firenze, in that thou so great,
 Canst flap thy wings o'er land and sea alike,
 And that thy name expands itself through hell.
 Among the thieves five of thy citizens 4
 I found of station such as brought me shame,
 And no great honour dost thou reach by them.
 But if the dreams of early morn come true, 7
 Only a short while hence, and thou wilt feel
 What Prato, others not to name, for thee
 Doth crave: and none too soon, if soon it come; 10
 And would e'en now 'twere come, since come it must!
 For more 'twill grieve me, as I age the more.
 Thence we moved on; and o'er the steps, which first 13
 The jutting rocks had made for our descent,
 My Guide remounted, drawing me with him.
 And as along the lonely way we went 16
 Among the stones and splinters of the rock,
 The foot without the hand made small advance.
 Grieved was I then, and now again I grieve, 19
 As memory recalls the sight I saw;
 And tighter than my wont my genius curb,
 Lest it run on where Virtue guides it not; 22
 So that if some good Star or better thing
 Have given me good, myself I grudge it not.
 As oft the peasant resting on the hill, 25
 What time the orb, that all the world illumes,
 Hides his face from us for the shortest space,
 When now the fly gives way unto the gnat, 28
 Sees countless fire-flies in the vale below,
 There, where perchance he ploughs, or gathers grapes,
 With flames as many, all in brightest glow, 31

The eighth crevasse was shining in full view,
 Soon as I came, where open'd out its depth.
 And as the prophet, whom the bears avenged, 34
 Beheld the parting of Elijah's car,
 When up to heaven the horses mounted straight,
 And he could only follow with his eye, 37
 So that he saw nought but the flame alone,
 Which like a little cloud floated aloft,
 E'en so each flame along the moat's gorge moved ; 40
 For none discloses whom it steals away,
 And yet each flame a sinner hides within.
 Tiptoe upon the bridge I stood to view, 43
 And if I had not clutched a jutting stone,
 I should have fallen in without a push.
 My Guide, who saw me thus intent, said then : 46
 " Within the fires the spirits are contained ;
 Each wraps himself in that wherein he burns."
 " My Master," answered I, " in hearing thee, 49
 I am the more assured ; I thought but now
 That thus it was, and wished e'en now to ask,
 Who in that fire may be, which comes so cleft 52
 At top, that from the pyre it seems to rise,
 Where with his brother Eteocles was laid."
 And he : " Tortured within Ulysses is, 55
 With Diomede ; in company they go
 To vengeance now, as erst to deeds of wrath ;
 And in their flame enveloped, they bewail 58
 The ambush of the horse, that made the gate,
 Through which passed forth the noble stock of Rome.
 Therein they weep the fraud, which still in death 61
 Makes Deidamia for Achilles mourn ;
 And forfeit pay for the Palladium."
 " If, Master, from within those fires they are 64
 Allowed to speak at all," said I, " I pray,
 And beg this prayer may for a thousand stand,
 Refuse me not thy leave to stay awhile, 67
 Until the hornèd flame shall this way come ;

See how in eagerness toward it I stretch.
And he : " Truly this prayer of thine deserves 70
My highest praise, and therefore I accede ;
But careful be thine own tongue to restrain.
Leave speech to me, for well do I surmise 73
What thou would'st learn ; as they perhaps might be,
Since they were Greeks, churlish to words of thine."
When now the flame had reached a point, that seemed 76
In time and place convenient to my guide,
After this fashion did I hear him speak :
" Ye spirits, both imprisoned in one flame, 79
If I deserved it of you, while I lived,
If aught deserved, be it or more or less,
When in the world I wrote my lofty verse, 82
Move not away, but of you let the one
Say where, misled by self he went to die."
Hereon the greater horn of th' ancient flame 85
Began to wave about with murmuring sound,
Like fire tormented by a draught of wind.
And then the tip of it, moving this way 88
And that, as though it were the tongue that spoke,
Threw forth abroad a voice, and said : " What time
I left Circe, who for a year and more 91
Nigh Gaeta detained me in retreat,
Before Æneas thus that city named,
No sweet thought of my son, nor duty to 94
My aged sire, not e'en the love wherewith
I should have gladdened my Penelope,
Could overbear in me the ardent wish 97
I had to make experience of the world,
And all the vice and virtue of mankind ;
But to the depths of open sea myself 100
I trusted in one single ship with that
Small crew, that never had deserted me.
The coast on either side as far as Spain, 103
Morocco and Sardinia's isle I saw,
And all the rest which that sea washes round.

- My comrades now and I were stiff and old, 106
 When to that narrow strait we came, where stand
 The landmarks, which by Hercules were fixed,
 That man no farther should presume to pass. 109
 On my right hand I left Seville, and had
 Already on the other Ceuta passed.
- “ Brothers, who through a hundred thousand risks,” 112
 I said to them, “ have reached the western main,
 For such brief span as still remains to you
 To try your senses’ vigilance, grudge not 115
 A hearty will to make behind the sun
 Acquaintance with the lands untrod by man.
- Consider now the stock from whence ye spring : 118
 Ye were not made to live the brute beasts’ lives,
 But knowledge to pursue and valour’s fame.”
- So keen I made my comrades to push on 121
 A farther voyage by this brief appeal,
 That scarce could I have after held them back.
- And with stern set against the morning sun, 124
 We made our oars the wings of our fools’ flight,
 Always advancing with the helm to port.
- The stars already of the other pole 127
 At night I saw ; our own was sunk so low,
 It rose no more above the ocean floor.
- Five times enkindled, and as oft extinct 130
 Had been the light shed from beneath the moon,
 Since we had entered on our arduous course ;
- When darkly to our view in distance far 133
 A mountain rose, that seemed to me so high,
 Methought the like I never had beheld.
- Great was the joy ; a joy soon turned to grief : 136
 From the new land a hurricane burst forth,
 And smote upon the fore part of our ship.
- Three times the swirl of water whirled her round ; 139
 The fourth on high raised up the poop in air,
 Down went the prow, such was Another’s Will,
 Until above us all the sea closed in.” 142

CANTO XXVII.

*Eighth Circle—Eighth Crevasse—Fraudulent Advisers—
Guido da Montefeltro.*

ERECT and steady pointed up the flame,
 Speaking no more, about to move away,
 As our sweet Poet his permission gave ;
 When yet another, that behind it came, 4
 Caused us to turn our eyes toward its tip,
 By a confused sound that issued thence.
 As the Sicilian bull, which bellowed first 7
 With roar of him ('twas just it should be thus)
 Who with his file himself had tuned it so,
 Bellowed with moanings of its sufferers, 10
 Such, that although 'twas only made of brass,
 It seemed itself transfixed with agony ;
 So, from the lack of exit and a vent, 13
 At their beginning in the fire the words
 Of grief came rendered in the fire's own speech ;
 But when they had their passage forced up through 16
 The point, giving to it vibration such
 As in their course the tongue had given them,
 We heard: " O thou, towards whom I now direct 19
 My voice, and who in Lombard phrase just now
 Didst say, ' Now go, I trouble thee no more,'
 Though I perchance may somewhat late arrive, 22
 Begudge me not to halt and talk with me ;
 Thou seest I grudge it not, although on fire,
 If thou, but lately on this blind world cast, 25
 From Latium hail, the sweetest of all lands,
 From whence my load of guilt I hither bring,
 Say, have the Romagnoles or peace or war ; 28
 For from the heights between Urbino and

The ridge, where Tiber is unlocked, I come."
 I was the while attentive bending down, 31
 When my Guide touched me lightly on my side,
 Saying : " A Latian this, so speak thyself."
 And I, who ready was with the reply, 34
 Without delay began at once to speak :
 " O soul, that in yon depth art hid below,
 Thine own Romagna in her tyrants' hearts 37
 Now is not, nor was ever without war ;
 But open warfare 'twas not, when I left.
 Ravenna stands, as she long years hath stood ; 40
 The eagle of Polenta hovers there,
 So that his pinions shadow Cervia.
 The city, which so long was put to proof, 43
 And of the French piled up a gory heap,
 Under the Green Paws finds itself as yet.
 The Mastiffs of Verrucchio, old and young, 46
 Who to Montagna sorry jailers proved,
 Still as they're wont, like augers, ply their teeth.
 The towns Lamone and Santerno lave 49
 The lion-cub on argent field directs,
 And as the seasons change, he changes sides.
 The City too, whose flank the Savio bathes, 52
 As between plain and mountain she is set ;
 So between tyranny and freedom lives.
 Now say, I pray thee, who thou art : nor be 55
 More hard than has another been to thee ;
 So may thy name on earth hold up its front."
 After the flame awhile had roared again 58
 In its own way, it waved its sharpened point
 This way and that, and thus gave forth its breath.
 " If I supposed I answer had to make 61
 To one who should some day return to earth,
 Without more quiverings should this flame abide :
 But in that never from this depth did one 64
 Return alive, if what I hear be true,
 I answer without fear of infamy.

- A man of arms I was ; then Cordelier, 67
 Trusting, so girt, to make the full amends ;
 And certes well nigh was this trust made good,
 But for the Great High Priest, whom ill betide, 70
 That sent me back to my first evil ways :
 And how and why, I would thou hear from me.
 While yet I bore the form of flesh and bone 73
 My mother gave to me, mine were the deeds
 Not of a lion, rather of a fox.
 All stratagems and every covert path 76
 I knew full well, and so employed these arts,
 The sound of them went out to the world's end :
 But when I found that I had that point reached 79
 Of life, where it behoves men, one and all,
 To shorten sail, and gather tackle in,
 That, which before was pleasant, now displeased ; 82
 Repentant, to confession I repaired,
 And might, wretch that I am, have saved myself.
 But of your modern Pharisees the Prince, 85
 Engaged in war hard by the Lateran,
 And not with Saracens, nor yet with Jews,
 (For all his enemies were Christian men ; 88
 Not one had been at capture of Acre,
 Nor e'en a trader in the Soldan's land,)
 His Supreme Office he regarded not, 91
 His Holy Orders, nor in me the cord,
 Which used to make those girt with it more lean.
 But as within Soractê Constantine 94
 Prayed Sylvester to heal his leprosy,
 So this man prayed me as a tried expert,
 To heal him of the fever of his pride : 97
 Advice he sought from me ! I held my tongue ;
 For as one drunk with wine he seemed to speak.
 'Let not thy heart misgive thee,' said he then ; 100
 'This moment I absolve thee ; only show
 How Penestrino I may lay in dust.
 Heaven can I or ope or shut to thee, 103

- As thou dost know ; therefore the keys are two,
Held by my predecessor not too dear.'
- His weighty arguments thus pushed me on, 106
Till silence seemed my less wise course.
So then I said : If, Father, from this sin,
Wherein I now must fall, thou wash me clean, 109
A promise large and its observance small
Will bring thee triumph on thy lofty Chair."
- So soon as I was dead, came Francis then 112
For me, but one of the black cherubim
Cried out : 'Take him not thou, nor me defraud.
He must come down among my slaves below, 115
Because he offered counsel of deceit,
For which since then I've held him by the hair.
Absolved is none, who is not penitent ; 118
And none can both repent and lust at once :
Such contradictions never can agree.'
- What anguish then ! what an awakening mine ! 121
When he laid hold of me, and said : ' Perhaps
Thou didst not think I was so logical.'
- He bore me off to Minos, who entwined 124
Eight times his tail upon his stubborn back,
And as he bit it in sheer rage, he said :
'This is a sinner for the thievish fire.' 127
So as thou seest, here for ever lost,
And clothèd thus, I wander in remorse."
- When he his story had completed thus, 130
The flame moved off with shrieks of agony,
Twisting and tossing up its pointed horn.
Onward we passed, my Guide and I, along 133
The reef, up to the other arch which spans
The fosse, where the due wage is paid to such
As sow discord, and house a load of guilt. 136

CANTO XXVIII.

*Eighth Circle—Ninth Crevasse—Disseminators of Discord—
Mahomet—Fra Dolcino—Pier da Medicina—Curio—
Mosca—Bertram del Bormio.*

WHO could prevail, e'en in unfettered prose,
 To tell in full by oft repeated tale
 The sum of what I saw of wounds and blood?
 All tongues together would indeed fall short, 4
 For neither speech expressed, nor silent thought,
 Has the capacity to embrace so much.
 If were collected once again all those, 7
 Who in old times lay groaning in the blood
 Poured out upon Apulia's fateful plains
 By Trojans, and in that protracted war, 10
 Wherein the heavy spoil of rings was ta'en,
 As Livy writes, who never goes astray;
 As well as they, who felt the smart of blows, 13
 That Robert Guiscard dealt in strenuous fight;
 And they whose bones are picked up still to-day
 At Ceperanno, where Apulians each 16
 Proved false; and there at Tagliacozzo too,
 Where old Alardo conquered without arms;
 And all, who limbs, or maimed, or wounded, can 19
 Display, would no way be equivalent
 To th' hideous aspect of the ninth crevasse.
 A barrel by the loss of central or 22
 Side stave ne'er gaped so wide, as one I saw
 Cleft from the chin down to the fundament.
 Between his legs hung his intestines down, 25

Exposed the liver and the dismal bag,
 Which what is swallowed turns to excrement.
 While on the sight of him I stand engaged, 28
 He looked at me, and open tore his breast
 With his own hands ; " See how I rend myself,"
 He said : " See Mahomet dismembered thus. 31
 Before me Ali goes his way in tears,
 His visage from the chin to forelock cleft.
 And all the others that thou seest here 34
 Sowers of scandal and schismatics were
 In life, and therefore now are thus split up.
 A devil here behind this schism makes 37
 In us, remitting to the cruel edge
 Of his sharp sword each one of this our band,
 Oft as the dismal circuit we complete, 40
 By reason that the wounds have healèd up,
 Before we pass again in front of him.
 But who art thou, there pensive on the rock, 43
 Perhaps awhile the sentence to delay,
 Adjudged upon thine own acknowledgement ?"
 " Death hath not reached him yet, nor him doth guilt 46
 Bring here to torment," so my Master said ;
 " But to give him a full experience,
 To me, who now am dead, appointed 'tis 49
 From round to round to lead him here through hell :
 And this is true, as that I speak to thee."
 More were they than a hundred, who upon 52
 Such words paused in the moat to gaze at me,
 Forgetting torture in astonishment.
 " Thou, who perchance ere long wilt see the sun, 55
 Tell Fra Dulcino, if he would not soon
 Follow me hither, to provide himself
 With store of victual, lest the stress of snow 58
 Should leave a victory to the Novarese,
 Not easy for them otherwise to gain."
 With one foot ready to resume his round, 61
 This charge did Mahomet address to me ;

Then to proceed he set it on the ground.
 Another who appeared with throat pierced through, 64
 Whose nose down from the eyebrows had been slit
 And of whose ears but one alone remained,
 Pausing to gaze in wonder upon me 67
 With all the rest, in presence of them all,
 Open'd his wesand, vermil-red outside,
 And said : "Thou, whom no guilt hath sentenced here, 70
 And whom I saw above on Latian soil,
 If a too strong resemblance cheat me not,
 Remember Pier da Medicina, if 73
 Once more to see the fair plain thou return,
 That from Vercelli slopes to Mercabò ;
 And let the two best men in Fano know, 76
 Lord Angiolello and Guido I mean
 That if prevision here be not in vain,
 They from their ship will be cast overboard, 79
 And near Cattolica be drowned in sacks,
 Through the betrayal of a felon prince.
 'Twixt isle of Cyprus and Majolica 82
 Never hath Neptune witnessed crime so foul,
 No not by pirates nor by Argives e'en.
 That traitor, who with but one eye doth see, 85
 And holds the land, which one near me could wish
 He'd hunger'd long ere he had ever seen,
 Will make them come to conference with him, 88
 And then will do a deed, that will require
 No prayer nor vow against Focara's gales."
 And I to him : "Show and declare to me, 91
 An' thou would'st have me mention thee above,
 Who is't that found that land a sorry sight?"
 He laid his hand then on the jaw of one 94
 Of his own company, and open'd wide
 His mouth, and cried : "He's here, and he is dumb :
 An exile, he in Cæsar overcame 97
 All doubt, affirming that, if well prepared,
 A man by waiting turns his chance to loss."

- Indeed dumbfounded did he seem to me 100
 With tongue from wesand sever'd utterly,
 The Curio of old so bold in speech !
- Another who was maimed of both his hands, 103
 Raising their stumps athwart the dusky air,
 So that his face was foulèd with their blood,
 Cried out : " The Mosca too thou'lt recollect, 106
 Who said, *Alas! What's done is ne'er undone,*
 Which for the Tuscans proved a sorry seed."
 " And death," I added, " unto all thy father's race." 109
 Whereon in sorrow upon sorrow heaped,
 In melancholy madness he moved off.
- But I remained, observing still the crowd, 112
 And saw a thing, that I should be afraid
 Without a voucher to relate myself ;
- If not by Conscience reassured, which aye 115
 The good companion is, that sets man free
 Beneath the breastplate of a clean record.
- I saw indeed, and think I see it still, 118
 The headless trunk of one advance, who walked
 E'en as the others of the dismal herd.
- The sever'd head, held by the hair, swung in 121
 The hand, just as a lantern's wont to swing :
 And as on us it gazed, it said : " Ah me !"
- Of his own self he made for self a lamp, 124
 And two there were in one, and one in two ;
 How which can be, He knows, Who so ordains.
- And when he stood erect below the bridge, 127
 He lifted high his arm, with it the head,
 Nearer to bring its utterance to us,
- Which was : " See now this grievous penalty, 130
 Thou, who, yet breathing, visitest the dead ;
 See if there be any as great as this.
- And that thou mayst bear news of me above, 133
 Know that Bertram dal Bormio am I,
 Who to the young king did ill counsel give.
 Father and son rebels to each I made : 136

Ahitophel by base suggestions ne'er
To Absalom and David wrought worse ill.
Because I severed men so near allied,
My brain I carry, severed ah! from its
Initial root, planted within this trunk;
Lex Talionis thus in me observed."

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CANTO XXIX.

*Eighth Circle—Ninth Crevasse—Disseminators of Discord—
 Geri del Bello—Tenth Crevasse—Forgers of every kind—
 Alchemists—Griffolino and Capocchio.*

THOSE many people and their diverse wounds
 Had made mine eyes so drunken with their tears,
 That all their wish was to stay there and weep.
 But Virgil said: "Why gazing still? 4
 Thy vision why thus resting here, upon
 These mutilated ghosts in gloom below?
 Not such thine action in the pits we've passed. 7
 Think if thou hope to count them all, that yet
 This valley winds for two and twenty miles;
 And 'neath our feet already is the moon; 10
 Short now the time that is allotted us,
 And more there is to see than what thou seest."
 "If thou had turned," such was my prompt reply, 13
 "Thy thought unto the cause, that fixed my gaze,
 Thou hadst perchance a longer stay allowed."
 My Leader was already moving on, 16
 And I behind him walked, as I replied,
 Adding withal: "In yonder den, on which
 I kept mine eyes in such attention fixed, 19
 I think a spirit of my own kin weeps
 The sin, which there below costs him so dear."
 Then said the Master: "Let not now thy thoughts 22
 Henceforth be harassed any more by him:
 Elsewhere give heed, and let him there remain;
 For at the foot of the small bridge I saw 25
 His finger mark thee with fierce menaces,
 And Geri del Bello I heard him called.
 Thou at the moment wast so deep engaged 28

With him, who once did Altaforte hold,
 Thou didst not look that way ; so on he passed."

"O Leader mine, the outrage of his death,
 Still unavenged," said I, "by anyone,

Who is, as kinsman, partner in his shame,
 Made him disdain me ; wherefore he withdrew

Without a word to me, as I suppose ;
 And so has made me pity him the more."

Such our discourse up to the point first reached,
 Which from the rock commands the next crevasse

To bottom quite, had light been fuller there.
 When 'bove the cloister now we stood, which is

Of Sinpouches the last, so that within
 Our ken its lay brethren were visible,

Divers laments like arrows pierced me through

With winged shafts, that came with pity barbed,
 Such that with both mine hands I stopped my ears.

If 'twixt July and September from forth

The hospitals of Valdichiana, and
 Maremma and Sardinia, all the sick

Were in one ditch together laid, what pain

Were there, such was it here ; and stench came up,
 Such as from gangrened limbs is wont to rise.

Downward we passed over the final ridge

Of the long cliff, yet ever to the left ;
 And clearer then became my vision down

Towards the bottom, where the minister

Of the High Lord, Justice infallible,
 Visits the forgers, here enregister'd.

I trow it was no sorrier sight to see

The people of Egina, all plague struck,
 When the whole air so reeked with pestilence,

That living things, down to the little worm.

All dropped ; and the whole race was afterward,
 As sing the Poets in full confidence,

Anew created from the seed of ants,

Than 'twas to see through that lugubrious vale

The spirits wasting in their several heaps.
 One on the other lay, on belly one, 67
 One on his neighbour's back, while yet a third
 Upon all fours dragged on his dismal way.
 On went we step by step, without a word, 70
 Watching and listening to the sick, who were
 Unable quite to lift their bodies up.
 Two I beheld, seated and leaning each 73
 'Gainst each, like plates set down before the fire,
 From head to foot spotted with noisome scab.
 And never saw I curry-comb so plied 76
 By groom, awaited by impatient lord,
 Or 'gainst his will detained from longed for bed,
 As each upon himself plied off the scrape 79
 Of nail in fury at the maddening itch,
 For which by other means was no relief.
 So from the skin the nails scraped down the scabs, 82
 As a knife scrapes the scales of a great carp,
 Or of a fish of a yet coarser grain.
 "O thou, whose fingers thus dismantle thee," 85
 My Guide to one of them began to say,
 "And who to pincers turnest them at times,
 Tell us if any Latian be of these 88
 Enclosed therein, so may thy nail be found
 Sufficient through all ages for such toil."
 "Latians are we, whom wasted thus thou seest, 91
 Here, both of us," so one replied in tears.
 "But who art thou, that askest this of us?"
 My Leader said: "One am I that descends 94
 From ledge to ledge here with this living man,
 And purpose to show him the realms of hell."
 Their mutual support forthwith gave way: 97
 Trembling, each of them turned him round to me,
 With those, whom echoes of our words had reached.
 Close to my side my kindly Master drew, 100
 And said: "Speak to them as thy will suggests."
 And as he willed it so, I thus began:

- " So your remembrance ne'er shall fleet away 103
 In the first world from memory of men,
 Rather may live through many suns afresh,
 Say who ye are, and of what family ; 106
 Your penalty, noisome and foul as 'tis,
 May not deter you from declaring this."
- " I of Arezzo was, whom," so said one, 109
 " Albert the Sieneſe burned at the ſtake :
 But what I died for does not bring me here.
 'Tis true I ſaid to him, ſpeaking in jeſt, 112
 That I knew how to fly i' th' air ; and he
 With curious eagreſſneſs and little wit
 Would have me ſhew the trick ; and but that I 115
 Did not make him a Dædalus, he made
 One, whom he accounted as his ſon, burn me.
 But to this evil pouch, laſt of the ten, 118
 For alchemy I practiſed in the world,
 Minos, who may not err, did ſentence me."
- I to the Poet then : " Now was there e'er 121
 A race more vain than are the Sieneſe ?
 Certes they leave the French long way behind."
- The other leper hearing then my words, 124
 Replied to them : Stricca thou muſt except,
 Who ſimple living underſtood ſo well ;
 And Niccolò, the firſt to introduce 127
 Luxurious uſe of clove-pink flavour from
 The garden, where its ſeed unbidden ſprings ;
 Except the club too, where his vineyard and 130
 Broad foreſts Caccia d'Asciano loſt,
 And the Abbagliato ſhined his wit.
 But that thou know who ſeconds thee againſt 133
 The Sieneſe, ſharpen thine eye on me,
 So that my face may give a true reſponſe,
 And thou wilt ſee I am Capocchio's ghoul, 136
 Whoſe alchemy the metals falſified ;
 And if mine eye tell true, thou muſt recall,
 How good an ape I was of Nature's work. 139

CANTO XXX.

*Eighth Circle—Tenth Crevasse—Falsifiers of every kind—
 Personators—Gianni Schicchi—Mirra—Three Coiners—
 Master Adam—Four Liars.*

WHAT time that Juno 'gainst the Theban race
 In fury raged, because of Semele,
 As she once and again made manifest,
 In frenzy Athamas became so mad, 4
 That as he saw his wife pass by in charge
 Of their two boys, one in her either hand,
 He shrieked : " Spread we the nets that I may catch 7
 The lioness and cubs, as they pass out ; "
 And then stretched forth his unrelenting claws,
 And seizing one, Learchus was his name, 10
 He whirled him round, and dashed him 'gainst a stone ;
 And with her other charge she drowned herself :
 And when the wheel of Fortune overturned 13
 The vaulting loftiness of Trojan pride
 And king and kingdom in one ruin fell,
 Sad Hecuba, a wretched captive now, 16
 After she saw Polyxena was dead,
 And broken hearted on the sea-shore had
 Made the discovery of her Polydore, 19
 In stress of hapless fate barked like a dog,
 Her grief had so her reason overborne.
 But not in Thebes nor Troy were furies seen 22
 At any time on anything so fierce
 In torturing beasts, not to say limbs of men,
 As in two ghosts I saw, naked and wan, 25
 Who gnashing with their teeth, in fashion ran
 As of a hog that from the sty escapes.
 One on Capocchio seized, and at the nape 28

Fixed in the neck his tusks, so that he dragged
 Him on, grazing his belly on the ground.
 Said then the Aretin, who trembling stood : 31
 " This goblin is Gian Schicchi ; and he goes
 In fury dressing any hide he meets."
 " Ah," said I, " so may ne'er the other fix 34
 Its teeth into thy back, grudge not to tell,
 Who may it be, ere hence it slip away."
 And he to me : " This is the old world soul 37
 Of that abandoned Mirra, who in love
 Unnatural was her father's paramour.
 She to her sin with him did only come 40
 In false disguise, bearing a stranger's form ;
 As did the other, who goes there, when he
 To win the prize mare of the stud, made bold 43
 Buoso Donati's person to assume,
 Forging a will in all the forms of law."
 When the two furies now had passed away 46
 On whom the while I'd kept mine eye intent,
 I turned it to the other sons of sin.
 One did I see in fashion of a lute, 49
 If only at the groin, where man is fork'd,
 The lower limbs had there been taken off.
 The load of dropsy, which, with humours ill 52
 Digested, doth the members so distort,
 That face and belly no proportion bear,
 Caused him to keep his lips apart, as doth 55
 The hectic patient, who in thirst droops one
 Towards the chin, and curls the other up.
 " O ye, who come exempt from punishment, 58
 Wherefore I know not, to this gruesome world,"
 Said he to us : " look well, and give good heed
 To Master Adam in his misery : 61
 Plenty in life had I of all I wished ;
 And ah ! one drop of water now I crave.
 The rivulets, that from the verdant hills 64
 Of Casentino to the Arno run,

Keeping their channels always, cool and moist,
 Before me ever stand ; and not in vain ; 67
 For greater thirst their image doth excite,
 Than the disease which wastes my cheeks away.
 And thus stern justice, which torments me here, 70
 Finds in the place, wherein I sinned, a means
 To force these sighs of mine in swifter flight.
 There stands Romena, where in counterfeit 73
 I coined the money with the Baptist's stamp,
 For which I left my body at the the stake.
 But might I see the wretched soul of Guy, 76
 Or Alexander, or their brother here,
 For Branda's fount I'd not forego the sight.
 Already one is here within, if those 79
 Fierce Ghosts that ever made the round, speak true ;
 But with my pinioned limbs what boots me this ?
 If I were only now so light of foot, 82
 That in a hundred years I could one inch
 Advance, e'en now were I upon his track,
 In search of him through these misshapen folk, 85
 With its full circuit of eleven miles,
 Nor less in breadth than half a mile across.
 Through them I'm here amid this company : 88
 'Twas they persuaded me to stamp florins,
 That did three carats of alloy contain."
 And I to him : " Who are the abject pair 91
 That steam like moist hand on a winter's day,
 Lying together, near thee on the right ?"
 " I found them here, and since they have not turned," 94
 He said, " what time I sank into this ditch,
 Nor will they, I suppose, for evermore.
 The traitress one, who did accuse Joseph ; 97
 The other, Sinon, the false Greek from Troy :
 Burning in fever they exhale this stench."
 The one of them, who took it ill perchance 100
 That he should be thus darkly spoken of,
 Smote him with fist on his distended paunch,

- Which rattled then, as though it were a drum ; 103
 And Master Adam struck him with his arm,
 Which seemed to be not less hard, on the face,
 Saying to him : " Though power be gone from me 106
 To move with these o'erweighted limbs of mine,
 I have an arm free for such use as this."
 And he replied : " But on thy journey to 109
 The stake, thou had'st it not so ready then ;
 Though ready thus, and readier still to coin."
 He with the dropsy then : " Thou say'st the truth ; 112
 But witness true as this, thou didst not bear,
 When of the truth they questioned thee at Troy."
 " If I spake falsely, thou false coin didst make," 115
 Said Sinon, " and for one sin I am here,
 But thou for more than any devil else."
 " But recollect, thou perjured soul, the horse," 118
 Was his reply, who bore the swollen paunch,
 " And be't thy doom that all the world knows this."
 " Thy tortue be the thirst that cracks thy tongue," 121
 Rejoined the Greek : " and thy foul humours swell
 Thy belly as a hedge before thine eyes."
 The Coiner then : " As is its wont, thy mouth 124
 Gapes only to let out insulting words ;
 Yet if I thirst, and water puff me up,
 Fever burns thee, and racks thine aching head ; 127
 Few words indeed were needed to invite
 Thee to drink up Narcissus' looking glass."
 Listening to them I had been all intent, 130
 When said my Master : " An thou wilt, stare on ;
 But little more, and 'tween us there'll be strife."
 When thus I heard him in displeasure speak, 133
 Towards him I turned, so utterly abashed,
 That in remembrance haunts me still the shame.
 And as is one who dreams of some mishap, 136
 And dreaming, wishes it were but a dream,
 So that he craves what is, as though 'twere not,
 Such was myself, unable to find words, 139

Wishing to make excuse, and all the while
Excusing, though I thought I did it not.
“Less shame doth wash away a greater fault,”
The Master said, “than this hath been of thine ;
So of all sadness now unload thyself ;
And take account that ever at thy side
Am I, if chance again should set thee where
Folks are engaged in wrangle of this sort :
The wish to hear it is a vulgar wish.”

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CANTO XXXI.

*Descent into the Ninth Circle—The Giants around the Well—
Nimrod—Ephialtes—Antæus—.*

ONE and the self same tongue first stung me so,
 That both my cheeks with blushes it suffused,
 And then again the remedy supplied.

Thus do I hear it said Achilles' spear, 4
 His father's heirloom, had the power to give
 At first a sorry, then a gracious boon.

Our backs we turned on the great vale of woe, 7
 Up o'er the bank that girdles it about,
 And made our way across without a word.

Here it was less than night, and less than day, 10
 So that my vision reached short way ahead ;
 But the loud winding of a horn I heard,

Such as had made thunder itself seem faint ; 13
 And to one point it drew my straining eyes,
 As counter to it, they traced back its course.

No blast so terrible Orlando blew, 16
 After the dolorous rout upon that day,
 When great Charles lost his holy warrior-band.

Thither had I a short while turned my head, 19
 When many lofty towers I seemed to see :
 Then I : " What city, Master say, is this ? "

And he to me : " In that thy sight runs on 22
 Through dimness from a distance too remote,
 It happens that thy fancy goes astray.

Well wilt thou see, if thither thou arrive, 25
 How much the sense by distance is deceived :
 Wherefore push on somewhat more briskly now."

Then tenderly he took me by the hand, 28

And said : " Before much farther we advance,
 So that the fact may after seem less strange,
 Know that no towers are these, but Giants they : 31
 Around the bank, each in the pit, they stand,
 From navel downwards buried out of sight."
 As when the fogs disperse, the eye once more 34
 Can by degrees discern in outline what
 The vapour in the thickened air conceals,
 So piercing through that heavy atmosphere 37
 Obscure, as slowly I approach the brink,
 My error fled, and greater grew my fear.
 For as above its circular precinct 40
 The towers of Montereaggio crown-like rise,
 So on the bank that girdles round the pit,
 With bodies half exposed, uprose like towers 43
 The dreadful Giants, whom, when he thunders,
 Jove from high heaven still threatens with his bolts.
 Already I discerned the face of one, 46
 His chest, his shoulders, of his belly much,
 And both his arms down hanging by his sides.
 Certes, when Nature from the art surceased 49
 Of making creatures such, she did right well
 To take from Mars such ministers of war.
 And if of elephants and of great whales 52
 She still repents not, whoso closely looks,
 Holds her in them more just and more discreet :
 For where the force of mind intelligent 55
 To power is added with an ill design,
 No place of refuge then can man provide.
 His face appeared to me as long and broad, 58
 As at St Peter's is the Pine at Rome,
 And all his limbs to it proportioned well ;
 So that the bank, which as an apron served 61
 From middle to the feet, still showed above
 So much, that to reach high as to his hair,
 'Twere vain for Frisons three to 'tempt th' exploit. 64
 Thirty full palms of him did I behold

- Down from the point where men their mantles clasp.
 “*Rafel mai amech zabi almi,*” 67
 That savage mouth began to bellow forth,
 To which no sweeter psalms were suitable.
 My Guide towards him turned : “Thou stupid soul, 70
 Keep to thy horn ; with it relieve thyself,
 When wrath or other passion seizes thee.
 Feel round thy neck, and thou wilt find the cord, 73
 Which holds it tied to thee, thou muddled soul,
 Where it encompasses thy monstrous breast.”
 And then to me : “A self accuser this ; 76
 Nimrod it is, by whose accursed scheme
 A common language to the world is lost :
 We pass him by ; on him we waste no words, 79
 For unto him all speech is as his own
 To others, which by none is understood.”
 Our farther journey then we onward pushed, 82
 Turned to the left, and at a cross-bowshot
 We found the next, more fierce, and huger far.
 Whose was the master hand to bind him first, 85
 I cannot tell, but tightly lashed in front
 Was his left arm, the right upon his back,
 With chain, which kept him pinioned from the neck 88
 Low down, so that in parts exposed above
 Five times it twisted round his frame.
 “He in his pride once wished to put to test 91
 His own prowess against high Jove himself,”
 Thus spake my Guide, “so this reward he earned,”
 Ephialtes is his name, and his grand proof 94
 Was made, when Giants roused the fear of Gods :
 The arms he lifted then, he ne’er moves now.”
 And I to him : “If so might be, I would 97
 That of stupendous Briareus himself
 Mine eyes their own experience might have.”
 And he replied : “Antœus thou wilt see, 100
 And not far hence ; he speaks and is not bound.
 To depth of all guilt he will let us down.

- Far hence is he, whom thou wouldst fain behold ; 103
 He stands in bonds, and is like this in form,
 Save that in aspect he seems fiercer still.”
- Ne'er did impetuous earthquake in its mightiest throe 106
 Make steeple rock with a like vehemence,
 As forthwith Ephialtes shook himself.
- Greater than ever was my dread of death, 109
 And for my death that fear had well sufficed,
 Had I not seen the bonds that held him fast.
- Onward advancing, we proceeded then, 112
 And to Antœus came, who five good ells,
 Without the head, rose up above the pit.
- “O thou, who in that fateful valley once, 115
 Where Scipio found himself the heir of fame,
 When Hannibal and all his host took flight,
- For booty took'st a thousand lions once, 118
 Of whom some think, hadst thou the battle joined,
 When war against high heaven thy brothers made,
- The sons of earth had won the victory ; 121
 Set us below, and show thyself no churl,
 Where cold locks up Cocytus ; send us not
- On to Typhœus, nor to Tityos. 124
 What most is here desired, this man can give :
 So stoop to us, nor curl thy lip in scorn.
- Still can he in the world restore thy fame ; 127
 He is alive, and length of days expects,
 If ere his time Grace call him not to her.”
- So spake the Master, and the other prompt 130
 Put forth the hands, of which once Hercules
 Felt the tight grip, and in them took my Guide.
- When Virgil felt himself thus held, to me 133
 He said : “Come near that I take hold of thee,”
 And made me then one bundle with himself.
- E'en as the Carisend appears to one 136
 Who stands beneath her slope, when clouds pass o'er
 From quarter opposite to her incline,
 Such did Antœus seem to me, who stood 139

Watching him stoop ; and for the nonce
I could have wished to go some other way.
But gently in the depth, that swallows up
Judas and Lucifer, he set us down ;
Nor long did he remain thus bending low,
But as ship's mast erect he rose again.

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CANTO XXXII.

Ninth Circle—Traitors and Betrayers of Trust.

First Round—Caina.

Traitors to Kinsmen—Conti di Mangona—Camicion de' Pazzi.

Second Round—Antenora—Betrayers of their Country—

Bocca degli Abati—

Buoso da Duero—Ugolino.

IF rhymes I had as strident and as harsh,
 As would befit the dismal vault, whereon
 The weight of all the other rocks collects,
 The juices of my thoughts I would express 4
 More fully still, but since I have them not,
 Not without fear I bring myself to speak.
 For to describe the whole world's lowest depth 7
 Is no emprise to undertake in sport,
 Nor with a tongue that "Daddy, Mammy" lisps.
 But may those Ladies now assist my verse 10
 That helped Amphion raise round Thebes her walls;
 So shall my story to its facts respond.
 Ah, misgotten herds, beyond all else, 13
 Fixed in the place whereof to speak is hard,
 Better had ye on earth been sheep or goats.
 When in the darksome pit below we stood 16
 Beneath the Giant's feet, much lower down,
 And I still gazing at the lofty wall,
 A voice I heard: "Take heed, how here thou pass; 19
 Move on, that with the feet thou tread not on
 The herds worn out in brotherhood of woe."
 Whereon I turned, and saw in front of me 22

And underfoot a lake, which, frozen hard,
 In glass, not water, had its counterpart.

So thick a covering ne'er upon its stream 25
 In winter time did Austrian Danube form,
 Nor Tanais yonder 'neath the frozen zone,
 As there was seen ; for e'en had Tambernich, 28
 Or Pietrapano fallen upon it,
 At the mere edge it had not made a crack.

And as the frog its station takes to croak, 31
 With snout outside the water, when ofttimes
 The housewife dreams of gleaning in the fields ;
 Livid as far as where the blush of shame 34
 Is seen, were moaning ghosts within the ice,
 While their teeth chattered like the bills of cranes.

The countenance of each was downward held ; 37
 Of cold the mouth, of sadder heart the eyes
 With all are forward to give evidence.

When from a rapid glance around I turned, 40
 Down at my feet two did I see, so locked,
 The hair upon their heads was intermixed.

"Tell me, O ye with breasts thus close compressed, 43
 Who are ye?" said I: they bent back their necks ;
 And when their faces were towards me raised,
 Their eyes, till then moistened alone within, 46
 Welled over through the lids, and frost congealed
 The tears betwixt, and locked them up again.

Never did clamp two beams together bind 49
 In grip so tight ; and then, as might two rams,
 They butted one the other, in fierce rage.

And one, who was bereft of both his ears, 52
 Frost bitten, said (he too with face down cast)
 "Why dost thou closely thus examine us?
 If't be thy wish to know who these two are, 55
 The valley, whence Bisenzio floweth down,
 Their father Albert and themselves once owned.

Born of one mother both, Caina through 58
 Shalt thou search well, and never find a ghost,

More worthy in this jelly to be fixed ;
 Not him, whose breast and shadow by the hand 61
 Of Arthur once were shattered at one blow ;
 Not e'en Focaccia, nor yet him, whose head
 Obstructs me so, that nought beyond I see, 64
 And Sassal Mascheroni was his name ;
 If Tuscan, thou know'st well what sort he was.
 And that thou need no more from me, know that 67
 Camicion de' Pazzi I was once,
 And wait for Carlin my excuse to plead."
 A thousand faces then I saw, like dogs 70
 Grinning with cold : a shiver through me runs,
 And ever will at sight of frozen pools.
 And while towards the centre we advanced, 73
 Whereto the weight of all things gravitates,
 And I stood shivering in the eternal chill,
 Whether 'twere will, or destiny, or chance 76
 I know not, but as 'midst the heads I passed,
 I struck with heavy foot the face of one,
 Who in reproach cried out : " Why spurn me thus ? 79
 Unless thou come the vengeance to enhance
 Of Mont 'Aperti, why molest me here ?"
 And I : " Await me, Master, here awhile, 82
 So shalt I solve a doubt anent this ghost ;
 Then will I make what haste shall be thy will."
 My Leader stopped ; and to the ghost I said, 85
 Who roundly still assailed me with abuse,
 " Who art thou thus a stranger to revile ?"
 " And what art thou, that Antenora wouldst 88
 Pass through, smiting the cheeks of others so
 That wert thou living, such deed were too much ?"
 " I am alive, and it may serve thee well," 91
 My answer thus, " if fame be thy desire,
 That mid my other notes I write thy name."
 And he to me : " My wish is the reverse ; 94
 Take thyself hence ; torment me now no more ;
 Useless thy skill in flattery in this hole."

- By nape of neck I caught him up, and said : 97
 "Now must and shalt thou tell thy name to me,
 Or on thy head shall not a hair be left."
- Then he to me : "Tear from its roots my hair, 100
 I will not tell nor show thee who I am,
 Though on my head thou fall a thousand times."
- His hair e'en now I'd twisted in my hand, 103
 And more than one tuft from it had I plucked,
 While with his eyes downcast he howled aloud ;
- When, "Bocca," cried another, "what ails thee? 106
 Is't not enough to chatter with thy jaws?
 Need'st bark as well? what devil hath thee now?"
- "Ah, now," I said, thy name I need no more, 109
 Malicious traitor, for unto thy shame,
 A true report of thee I'll carry off."
- "Begone," he said, "and what thou wilt relate : 112
 But be not silent, if thou get out hence,
 Of him, whose tongue but now so ready was.
- He for the Frenchmen's "*argent*" weeps ; and thou 115
 Can'st say, 'Him of Duera once I saw
 There, where the sinners in a cold bath sit.'
- And if some one should ask, who else was here, 118
 Beside thee he of Beccheria lies,
 For whom Firenze once did slit the throat.
- Gian Soldanier, I trow, is farther on, 121
 With Ganellon, and Tribaldello too,
 Who did unbar Faenza, while men slept."
- From him had we already gone away, 124
 When two I saw close frozen in one hole ;
 The head of one served for the other's cap.
- And just as bread in hunger is devoured, 127
 The one atop in th' other set his teeth,
 Just where the brain doth with the nape unite.
- Not otherwise did Tydeus once the brows 130
 Of Melanippus gnaw in high disdain,
 Than did this ghost the skull and all the rest.
- "O thou ! who by such bestial sign dost show 133

Thy hate for him, whom thou devourest now,
Tell me," I said, "why this? and I agree,
If thou with reason do complain of him,
When I know who ye are, and his offence,
I will requite thee in the world above,
If that I speak with, be not then dried up."

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CANTO XXXIII.

*Ninth Circle—Betrayers of Confidence—Second Round—
Antenora.*

*Betrayers of Country—Death of Count Ugolin—Third
Round—Tolomea—Betrayers of Comrades—Frate Alberigo
and Branca d' Orio.*

THAT sinner from his savage meal raised up
 His mouth, and wiped it on the hair of him,
 Whose head he had behind to pieces torn.
 Then he began : “Thou wouldst that I revive 4
 The desperate grief, that in mere thought alone
 Crusheth my heart, ere I its story tell.
 But if my words be seeds of infamy 7
 Unto the traitor on whose bones I feed,
 Thou then shalt see me speak and weep at once.
 I know not who thou art, nor by what means 10
 Thou cam’st down here, but Florentine in truth
 To me thou seemest, as I hear thee speak.
 And thou must know I was Count Ugolin, 13
 And Ruggieri, the Archbishop, this ;
 Now why to him a neighbour such I’ll tell.
 That, as the outcome of his ill designs, 16
 While fully trusting him, in prison I
 Was cast, and murdered there, no need to say.
 But still, what thou as yet canst not have heard, 19
 And that is, how malignant was my death,
 Thou shalt hear now, and know if he wronged me.
 A narrow slit within that wallèd cage, 22
 Which after me is called Starvation Tower,
 And in which others must be yet shut up,
 Already through its chink had shown to me 25
 The light of many moons, when the bad dream

I had tore off the veil of what should be.
 This man appeared to me as lord and chief, 28
 Hunting the wolf and whelps upon the heights,
 That shut out Lucca from the Pisans' view.
 With rav'nous hounds, eager and well in hand, 31
 Gualandi, Sismondi and Lanfranchi
 He had dispatched before him to the front.
 After short run the sire and cubs appeared 34
 To me tired out, and with well whetted fangs,
 Methought I saw the hounds rip up their flanks.
 When, ere the morrow dawned, myself awoke, 37
 I heard my children moaning in their sleep,
 For they were with me, and they asked for bread.
 Right cruel art thou, if not wrung with grief, 40
 Thinking already what my heart surmised :
 And if thou weapest not, when dost thou weep?
 They now had woke, and it was nigh the hour, 43
 When food was wont to be served out to us,
 Yet doubted each by reason of his dream.
 Below I heard the nailing of the door 46
 Of the dread tower, and looked thereon into
 The faces of my boys without a word.
 I did not weep ; within I was as stone ; 49
 They wept, and darling little Anselm said,
 " Father, thou lookest so ; what aileth thee ? "
 But I wept not, nor answer made to him 52
 That livelong day, nor e'en th' ensuing night,
 Until the next sun on the world came forth.
 As with thin ray the sun stole in athwart 55
 Our doleful cell, and I discovered then
 In their four faces what my own look was,
 I bit my own two hands in agony, 58
 They thinking that I did this in distress,
 And pang of hunger, suddenly sprang up,
 And cried : " Father, less pain to us by much, 61
 If thou eat us ; with this our wretched flesh
 Thou didst clothe us ; then from us strip it off."

- I calmed me then, to heighten not their woe. 64
 That day and next in silence we remained.
 Hard hearted Earth! Why opened not thy mouth?
 But when unto the fourth day we had come, 67
 At full length Gaddo fell down at my feet,
 And cried: "Why, Father dost Thou not help me?"
 And there he died; and as thou seest me now, 70
 I saw the three drop down, one after one,
 Between the fifth day and the sixth: whereon
 Already blind, I 'gan to grope towards each, 73
 And for two days called them by name, though dead:
 Hunger at last prevailed, where grief could not."
 His tale was told; he with distorted eyes, 76
 Seized on the wretched skull again with teeth,
 That fastened on the bone, strong as a dog's.
 Ah Pisa! shame indeed of every tribe 79
 In that fair land where sound of "*Si*" is heard;
 Since to chastise thee neighbours are too slow.
 Let the Caprara and Gorgona shift, 82
 And dam up Arno at its very mouth,
 So may each living soul in thee be drowned.
 For if 'twere rumoured that Count Ugolin 85
 Betrayed thy fortresses, thou should'st not have
 Exposed his children upon such a cross,
 O younger Thebes! their young days guiltless left, 88
 Uguccion, Brigata and the two
 Whose names are written in my song above.
 Further we went, where still the frozen pool 91
 In rigorous bonds holds yet another tribe,
 Not downward bent, but all thrown on their backs.
 Weeping with them allows them not to weep, 94
 And grief which finds a block upon the eyes,
 Turns inly to increase their agony.
 For in hard clusters first their tears collect, 97
 And, as with visors of clear crystal, thus
 Fill up the hollows underneath the brow.
 And now although by reason of the cold 100

All my sensations, as if callous grown,
 Had from position in my face withdrawn,
 Me thought already that I felt a breeze. 103
 Whereon I said: "Master, who stirreth this?
 Is not all vapour quite exhausted here?"
 And he to me: "Right soon wilt thou arrive, 106
 Where to thy question shall thine eyes reply,
 Seeing the cause that pours this current down."
 And from the wretches in the frozen crust 109
 Cried one to us: "O souls, so cruel that
 To you this lowest post hath been adjudged,
 Lift from mine eyes the hardness of these veils, 112
 So that awhile I may discharge the pain
 Which swells my heart, ere freeze my tears again."
 Wherefore I said: "If thou would have mine aid 115
 Say who thou art, and if I ease thee not,
 To bottom of the ice 'twere fit I sink."
 He answered then: "Fra Alberigo I; 118
 Fruit of sin's orchard here am I, as one
 Who for a fig with date am recompensed."
 "Oh," said I, "art thou then already dead?" 121
 And he to me: "How fares my body in
 The world above, no knowledge I possess.
 Such privilege this Tolomea hath, 124
 That oftentimes a soul will drop down here,
 Ere by the push of Atropos impelled.
 And that thou mayst more readily for me 127
 Remove from off my face these glazed tears,
 Know that soon as a soul a traitor proves,
 As did my own, its body then is seized, 130
 And by some demon is thereafter held,
 Until its own time hath run out its course.
 The soul itself into this cistern drops; 133
 And still perhaps the flesh is seen above
 Of this ghost too which winters in my rear.
 Him thou should'st know, if but just now arrived; 136
 Ser Branca D'Oria 'tis, and years not few

Have passed away, since he was thus shut in.”
“I trow,” said I, “herein thou play’st me false ; 139
For Branca Doria never yet hath died ;
He eats, he drinks, he sleeps and weareth clothes.”
“Into the moat above of Bloody claws,” 142
Said he, “where bubbling boils the sticky pitch,
Michael Zanche had not as yet arrived,
When this one in his stead a devil left 145
In his own body, as with the kinsman too,
Who with him did the deed of treachery.
But hither now to me extend thine hand, 148
And ope mine eyes.” But them I opened not,
And courteous ’twas with him to play the churl.
Ah Genoese ! strangers are ye to all 151
That’s good in practice, full of every vice !
Why are ye not hunted from off the earth ?
For with the vilest of the Romagnese, 154
One of yourselves I found, whose soul e’en now
By its ill deeds is in Cocytus plunged,
Who in the flesh above seems yet alive. 157

CANTO XXXIV.

*Ninth Circle—Betrayers of Confidence—Fourth Round—
Guidecca.*

*Traitors to Benefactors—Lucifer—The Mouths of Lucifer—
Lèse-Majesté—Judas Iscariot—Brutus—Cassius—From the
Centre of the Universe to the Southern Hemisphere.*

“*VEXILLA regis prodeunt inferni*
Toward us,” the Master said, “so forward turn
Thy looks, and see if thou discernest him.”

As when the breath of mist is thickly spread, 4
Or in our hemisphere when night draws on,
A mill appears far off, turned by the wind,
Such structure then methought came into view; 7
Whereon by rush of wind I backward shrank
Behind my Guide, no other shelter there.

Already I, (with fear I write the verse) 10
Stood where the ghosts were wholly cover'd o'er,
Transparent in the ice like straws in glass.

Some lie full length, others stand up erect : 13
This on its head, and that upon its feet :
A third its face bows archwise to the toes.

When we had made advance so far, that now 16
It pleased my Master to point out to me
The being, who had once been beauty's type,
From front of me he stepped, and bade me halt : 19
“See here is Dis,” he said ; “the place behold,
Where thou need'st arm thyself with fortitude.”

How icy cold I grew, and faint in speech, 22
Ask not, O Reader ; this I cannot write ;
For language would be all inadequate.

I did not die, nor yet remain alive. 25
Think, if a grain of fancy thou possess,
What I became, of either state deprived.

The emp'ror there of all the realms of woe 28

Forth from the ice with half his breast emerged ;
 And better with a giant I compare,
 Than giants with the measure of his arms : 31
 Judge then how vast the whole of him must be,
 Framed thus in due proportion to such parts.
 If once as glorious as he now is foul, 34
 And 'gainst his Maker lifted up his brow,
 All tribulation must from him proceed.
 And oh ! what marvel it appeared to me, 37
 When faces three I saw upon his head !
 One fronted us, and this was vermil red ;
 The other two, which were with it conjoined, 40
 Above the middle of each shoulder rose,
 And all united in the crown at top.
 That on the right 'twixt white and yellow seemed ; 43
 The left to look on bore the tint of such
 As come from regions whence the Nile descends.
 Underneath each issued two mighty wings, 46
 Of size befitting bird of such estate.
 No sail afloat I've seen of sweep so broad.
 They were not feather'd ; rather like the bat's 49
 In form ; and these he fan-like flapped in air ;
 So that from him three winds in currents rushed,
 Whereby Cocytus was all frozen o'er. 52
 Forth from six eyes rolled tears, which o'er three chins
 Trickled slow down in slaver mixed with blood.
 In every mouth he with his teeth crunched up 55
 A sinner's bones, like hemp-stalks crushed by brakes,
 So that he thus tormented three at once.
 The munching of the mouth for him in front 58
 Was naught compared to clawing, when the spine
 Was left at times denuded of the skin.
 " That soul up there in fiercest agony," 61
 The Master said : " Judas Iscariot is,
 His head within, his legs convulsed outside.
 Of those two with their heads towards the ground, 64
 Brutus is he, who from the black jaw hangs ;

- Mark how he writhes, and utters not a sound :
 And Cassius is the other with huge limbs. 67
 But once again night rises, and 'tis time
 Now to depart, for we have seen the whole."
 Then as desired, I clasped him round the neck ; 70
 Thereon he marked with care both time and place,
 And when the wings were widest spread apart,
 He fastened tight upon the shaggy flanks ; 73
 And downward then descended tuft by tuft,
 Between the thick hair, and the frozen crusts.
 But when we reached the point, whereat the thigh 76
 Hinges exactly on the thickest haunch,
 My Guide with effort and with hard fetched breath
 Turned his head round to where the heels had been, 79
 And grappled with the hair as one who climbs,
 So that I thought him bound for hell again.
 " Hold tightly on, for by such stairs as these," 82
 The Master said, panting as one tired out,
 " Must we escape from ill so great as this."
 Then through a cleft within a rock he passed ; 85
 And having seated me upon its edge,
 Up to my side he came with cautious step.
 I raised mine eyes, and Lucifer I thought 88
 To see, as I had left him at the first,
 And saw his legs hanging above my head.
 And that I felt myself then sore perplexed, 91
 Let stupid folk suppose, who do not see
 What point it is that I had overpassed.
 " Rise up," the Master said, " upon thy feet : 94
 Long is the journey, and the road unkind ;
 The sun e'en now returns half way from tierce."
 No saunter was it through palatial halls, 97
 Where we then were, but through a natural cave,
 With floor uneven, and but scanty light.
 " Ere from th' abyss I now make my escape, 100
 O Master mine," said I, as to my feet I rose,
 " A word I pray mine error to correct :

- Where is the ice? and how hath he become 103
 Thus upside down? and how in space so brief
 Has the sun passed from evening into morn?"
- And he to me: "Thou think'st thyself to be 106
 On that side of the centre, where I caught
 The foul worm's hide, that perforates the world.
 While I descended, there indeed thou wast: 109
 But when I turned, then thou hadst passed the point,
 Whereto all weights from every quarter tend;
 And now beneath that hemisphere art come, 112
 Right opposite to that, o'er which spreads out
 The great dry land, below whose highest point
 Was slain the Man, sinless in birth and life. 115
 Thy foot now stands upon a little sphere,
 Which is the counterface of Giudecca.
 Here it is morning, when 'tis evening there; 118
 And he, whose hair for us a ladder formed,
 Remains still fixed just as he was before:
 'Twas on this side that down from heaven he fell: 121
 The land which formerly extended here,
 In fear of him veiled itself 'neath the sea;
 Entered your hemisphere; and then perchance 124
 Him to escape, that, which on this side shows,
 Left here an empty space, and rose aloft."
 A place there is below, from Beelzebub 127
 Removed as far as depth of his own tomb,
 Which not by sight is known, but by the sound
 Of a small rivulet, that hither falls 130
 Through cleft in rock which it has worn away,
 As on its course it winds in gentle slope.
 My Guide and I upon that hidden path 133
 Entered, to reach the world of light again;
 And without thought of taking any rest,
 We climbed, he first, and after him myself, 136
 Until through a round aperture I saw
 Some of those beauteous things that heaven bears on,
 And thence came forth once more to see the stars. 139



PURGATORIO.

PURGATORIO.

CANTO I.

Proem to the Purgatory—The Four Stars.

Cato, Guardian of Purgatory.

O'ER kindlier waves to speed, the little bark
Of my intelligence now hoists its sail,
And leaves behind it a so cruel sea.
And of that second kingdom will I sing, 4
Wherein the human soul is purified,
And worthy grows for the ascent to Heaven.
But here let poetry from death once more 7
Rise up, ye Sacred Muses, for your own
I am ; and here Calliope awhile
Rise too, attending on my song with strain 10
Like that, which when the wretched magpies heard,
'Neath such a blow, of pardon they despaired.
A soft blue tint of sapphire from the east, 13
Which was collecting o'er the calm aspect
Of the pure air, far as the horizon curve,
Unto my vision brought renewed delight, 16
Soon as I left the atmosphere of death,
Which eyes and breast alike had steeped in grief.
The beauteous planet that invites to love, 19

Filled the wide orient with her radiant smiles,
 Veiling the Fishes in her escort train.
 I to the right hand turned, and fixed my thoughts 22
 Upon the other pole, and saw four stars,
 Ne'er seen before save by the primal pair.
 Their flamelets seem'd to make the heavens rejoice ; 25
 Widowed art thou, O region of the north,
 In that of sight of these thou art deprived.
 When from regarding them I had withdrawn, 28
 Turning a little toward the other pole,
 Whence had the Wain already disappeared,
 Near me I saw an old man all alone, 31
 Worthy in aspect of a reverence such,
 That ne'er did son more to a father owe.
 A flowing beard he wore, commingled with 34
 White hairs, like to the locks upon his head,
 Which on his breast fell down in twofold strand.
 The rays that beamed from the four holy stars 37
 Adorned his face with such a glow of light,
 That as the sun before me he appeared.
 " Who may ye be, that up the darkling stream 40
 Have from the eternal prison made escape ?"
 Waving those honourable locks, he said :
 " Who was your guide? or who your lantern here, 43
 Emerging from the depth of night profound,
 That blackens hell's dark valley evermore?
 Thus broken are the laws of the abyss? 46
 Or is there change in heaven of counsel new,
 That to my caves, though damnèd, ye repair?"
 My leader twitched me by the garment then, 49
 And with his words, and hand, and other signs
 Made me do reverence both with knee and brow,
 And answering, said : " I came not of myself: 52
 From heaven a lady did descend, whose prayers
 Made me help this man with my company.
 But since thou wllt that I should more explain 55
 Of our condition, as it truly is,

My wish it cannot be thine to refuse.
 Not yet hath this man seen his latest night, 58
 But by his folly was so near to it,
 That very little time was there to turn.
 So, as I said, to him was I dispatched 61
 To rescue him, and other way was none,
 Than this to which I have applied myself.
 To him I've shown the guilty in their tribes; 64
 And now I purpose to show him the souls,
 That here are purified beneath thy charge.
 How I have brought him it were long to tell : 67
 Strength from on high comes down, assisting me
 To lead him on to see thee and to hear.
 Be pleasèd now to welcome his approach : 70
 He goes in search of liberty ; who life
 For her refusèd, knows how dear she is.
 Thou knowest it ; nor bitter was thy death 73
 For her in Utica, where thou didst leave
 The robe, that on the Great Day shall shine bright :
 Th' eternal edicts we have not infringed ; 76
 For this man lives, and Minos binds not me,
 Who of the circle am, where the chaste eyes
 Of thine own Marcia are, who in her look 79
 Still prays thee, saintly heart, to keep her thine.
 For love of her incline then unto us ;
 Leave grant us through thy sevenfold realm to pass : 82
 Thanks due to thee I will report to her,
 If to be named below thou condescend."
 " Marcia was so delightsome to mine eyes, 85
 Long as I yonder dwelt," so said he then,
 I granted every grace she asked of me.
 Now that she dwells beyond the evil stream, 88
 No longer can she move me, by that law
 That was imposed, when thence I issued forth.
 Be it of heaven a lady, as thou say'st, 91
 Send and rule thee, no need of compliment ;
 'Tis all sufficient, if thou plead her name.

- Go then, and be't thy care to gird this man 94
 With a smooth rush, and then to bathe his face,
 So that from it all stain may be removed :
- For 'twere not fitting that an eye o'ercast 97
 By any film should meet the first who comes
 Of those who minister in Paradise.
- This little islet round its lowest base, 100
 Down yonder where the waves beat in on it,
 Doth rushes bear upon the oozy mud ;
- No other plant, that might break forth in leaf, 103
 Or stiffen into stalk, can there find life,
 Because it yields not to the rolling surf.
- Hither thereafter ye may not return ; 106
 The sun, which riseth now, will show you where
 To take the mountain at an easier slope."
- So vanish'd he ; and I rose up again 109
 Without a word, and closely drew me back
 Unto my Guide, and fixed mine eyes on him.
- And he began : " Follow my steps, my son ; 112
 Backward we turn, for from this point declines
 The open plain far as its limits stretch."
- The dawn was driving off the morning breeze, 115
 Which fled before it, so that far away
 I recognized the rippling of the sea.
- Along the solitary plain we went, 118
 As one returning to the path he'd missed,
 Who, till he finds it deems his wandering vain.
- Arriving at a place whereon the dew 122
 Defies the sun, and being in a spot
 O'erhung with shade, slowly evaporates,
- His two hands out upon the short grass spread 124
 In gentle movement did my Master lay ;
 And I, who well his purpose understood,
- Extended unto him my tear stained cheeks ; 127
 And on them he disclosed once more for me
 The full tint, which hell's smoke had hidden o'er,
 Thereon we came unto the lonely shore, 130

Which ne'er saw man over its waters sail,

Who afterward accomplished a return.

There did he gird me as the other willed :

133

And, wondrous sight, lo! as uprooted he

The humble plant, new-born upsprang its like

Upon the instant, where he plucked the first.

136

CANTO II.

*Ante-Purgatory—The Little Island—The Angel Helmsman—
The Arrival of Souls—Casella—Reappearance of Cato.*

THE sun had now to the horizon come,
 The curve meridian of which o'erhangs,
 When at its highest point, Jerusalem :
 And night, which opposite to him revolves, 4
 Forth from the Ganges issued with the Scales,
 Which her hands drop, as she predominates ;
 So that the white and vermil tinted cheeks 7
 Of beautiful Aurora, where I stood,
 With the advancing hour to orange turned.
 We still were standing 'longside of the sea, 10
 Like folks, who pondering on the road to take,
 Move on in heart, but with the body halt ;
 And lo ! as at the near approach of morn 13
 Mars through thick vapour gleams in fiery red,
 Down in the West over the ocean floor,
 Such seemed to me, (so may I see't again !) 16
 A light so swift in motion o'er the sea,
 No flight of wing could equal it in speed ;
 From which when I a moment had withdrawn 19
 Mine eye to make inquiry from my Guide,
 I saw't again more bright and larger grown.
 Then on its either side to me there seemed 22
 A something white, I knew not what ; and next
 Another by degrees 'neath this loom'd forth.
 As yet my Master utter'd not a word, 25
 Till the first whiteness open'd into wings ;
 Then as the pilot well he recognised,
 " Down, down," he cried, " and quickly bend the knee ; 28
 Behold, 'tis God's own Angel ; fold thy hands ;

Henceforth such messengers thou oft wilt see.
 Mark, he disdains machinery of men, 31
 So that no oar wills he, nor other sail
 Than his own wings 'twixt shores so far apart.
 See how he holds them heavenward set direct, 34
 Beating the air with their eternal pens,
 Which never moult, as mortal plumage doth."
 Then as to us nearer and nearer drew 37
 The bird divine, the brighter he appeared,
 So that the eye could not endure him near,
 But dropped to earth, while to the shore he came 40
 In a small galley, very swift and light,
 Such that the water swallowed none of it.
 Upon the poop the heavenly helmsman stood ; 43
 Beatitude seemed written on his brow ;
 More than a hundred spirits sat within.
 "*In Exitu Israel de Egitto*" 46
 They all, as with one voice, together sang,
 With what of that Psalm afterwards is writ,
 Then o'er them made he sign of Holy Cross ; 49
 Whereon they cast them all upon the shore,
 And he departed, as he came, with speed.
 The throng, that there remained; seemed to the place 52
 Like strangers, gazing round them and behind,
 As one who tastes the first time something new.
 On every side the sun was darting forth 55
 The arrows of the day, and his bright shafts
 Had from mid Heaven chased the Capricorn,
 When the new comers lifted up their heads 58
 Toward us, and said : " If ye indeed do know,
 Show us the way whereby to reach the hill."
 And Virgil answer'd them ; " Ye think perchance 61
 That of this place we have experience.
 But we are pilgrims even as yourselves.
 Just now, but just before you, we arrived 64
 Another way, which was so rough and hard,
 That climbing henceforth will to us seem play."

- The souls which by my breathing had of me
 Ta'en cognizance that I was still alive, 67
 In their astonishment turned pale as death.
- As, when with olive branch an envoy comes, 70
 A crowd collects, all eager for the news,
 And none is shy his neighbour's heels to press,
- So, fixed in scrutiny upon my face, 73
 Stood one and all those spirits fortunate,
 As though forgetful of the fairer life.
- Towards me I saw one of them dart forth 76
 To clasp me in his arms so lovingly,
 It moved me too like welcome to accord.
- Ah! empty shades, naught but the show of form! 79
 Three times behind him did I clasp my hands,
 And turned as oft with them upon my breast.
- Wonder, I trow, depicted was on me, 82
 So that the shadow smiled, and backward drew,
 And farther on I pushed pursuing him,
- In gentle accents bade he me be still: 85
 And who he was, well then I knew, and prayed
 For converse with me he awhile would stay.
- He answered me: "Just as I loved thee well 88
 In mortal coil, I love thee now released.
 Therefore I halt; but why thy journey here?"
- "My own Casella, to return once more 91
 To where I stand, I journey thus," said I:
 "But how from thee has so much time been ta'en?"
- And he to me: "No wrong is done to me, 94
 If he, who takes both when and whom he will,
 Have many times my passage here denied;
 For from the Righteous Will his own proceeds. 97
 In truth for three months had he taken off
 In all good will all who to enter wished.
- So I, who now had turned my face seaward, 100
 Where Tiber's waters to grow salt begin,
 By him was welcomed with benignity
- At that outlet, for which his wing now sets; 103

For ever at that point is gathered in
 Each who to Acheron doth not sink down."
 And I: "If no new law from thee doth take 106
 The memory or practice of Love's songs,
 Which could of yore my every passion calm,
 Therewith be pleased now somewhat to refresh 109
 My soul, which in its mortal body clothed,
 Is wearied sadly in its journey here."
 "*Amor che nella mente mi ragiona,*" 112
 Began he then to sing with sweetness such,
 The dulcet strain within me echoes still.
 My Master, and myself, and all the group 115
 That were with him, appeared in such content,
 As if the mind could care for nothing else.
 In close attention fixed upon his notes 118
 We stood, and lo! the reverend old man
 Cried out: "Ye loitering spirits, what is this?
 What means this negligence, this halting here? 120
 Haste to the hill to strip you of the scales,
 That let not God be manifest to you."
 Even as when collecting grain or tares, 124
 The doves assembled on their feeding ground,
 Quiet, without display or wonted strut,
 If aught appear to cause them an alarm, 127
 Upon a sudden leave their food alone,
 Because assailèd by a greater care,
 So that new company did I behold 130
 Leave off their song, and hasten to the hill,
 As one who goes, not knowing to what goal;
 Nor was our own departure less abrupt. 133

CANTO III.

Ante Purgatory—The little Island.

Souls dying in excommunication—King Manfred.

ALTHOUGH it happened that the sudden flight
 Across the open plain dispersed the rest,
 Bound for the Mount where Justice sifteth us,
 I to my trusty comrade closely drew ; 4
 And how without him had I held my course ?
 Who o'er the mountain would have been my guide ?
 In self reproach he seemed to blame himself. 7
 O conscience, full of dignity and pure,
 To thee how small an error brings remorse !
 Soon as his feet began to slacken haste, 10
 Which dignity impairs in every act,
 My mind, at first absorbed within itself,
 Resumed a wider range, as eagerly 13
 I set my face towards the hill in front,
 Which heavenward soareth highest from the sea.
 The sun, which blazed behind us red as fire, 16
 In front of me was broken to the form
 Of what in me was hindrance to its rays.
 I turned me to one side in the full fear 19
 That I had been abandoned, when I saw
 The ground was dark only in front of me :
 " Why still mistrust ? " my comforter hereon, 22
 Turning full round on me, began to say :
 " Think'st not that I am with thee, and thy guide ?
 Evening already 'tis, where buried lies 25
 The body, whence I once a shadow cast ;
 Naples holds it ; from Brindisi 'twas ta'en.
 Now if in front of me no shadow fall, 28

Marvel no more than at the heavens themselves,
 Where one ray ne'er another intercepts.
 To suffer torments both of heat and cold 31
 Bodies like mine the Power disposeth thus,
 Who, how He works, wills not should be revealed.
 Mad is the man who by our reason hopes 34
 To travel o'er Infinity's long road,
 Which the One Substance in Three persons holds.
 O Race of Men, at "'Tis so" pause content ; 37
 For could ye ever have discerned the whole,
 No need had been for Mary to bring forth ;
 And ye have seen some who desire in vain 40
 That this desire might be appeased, to whom
 'Tis given as their grief for evermore.
 I speak of Aristotle, Plato too, 43
 And not a few beside." He bowed his head
 In silence then, and deeply stirred remained.
 We to the mountain foot the while had come ; 46
 And found the cliff there so precipitous,
 The nimblest legs had been of no avail.
 'Tween Lerici and Turbia what path 49
 Most wild and desert is, a stairway were
 Easy and ample, when compared with that.
 "Who knows now on which hand the cliff declines," 52
 The master said, as his advance he stayed,
 "So one may mount that travels without wings ?"
 And while, with eyes fixed closely on the ground, 55
 He studied well the nature of the road,
 And I was looking upward round the rock,
 Upon the left to me appeared a group 58
 Of souls, whose feet were moving on toward us,
 Yet seemed not so, so slowly they approached.
 "Master," said I, "lift up thine eyes awhile : 61
 See some are yonder who advice will give,
 If this from thine own self thou canst not draw."
 He looked at them, and with a lightened air 64
 Replied : "Go we to them ; they slowly come :

And thou, sweet son, abide secure in hope."
 Those people still were so far off, I mean 67
 When we a thousand paces had advanced,
 As a skilled slinger with his hand might throw,
 When all drew up against the massive wall 70
 Of the high cliff, and still and stiff they stood;
 As one in doubt stands looking at his way.
 "Spirits, e'en now elect, your course complete," 73
 Virgil began, "I pray ye by that peace,
 Which I believe is looked for by you all,
 Tell us, where so the mountain side slopes back, 76
 As to afford a possible ascent ;
 For who knows most, him lost time vexeth most."
 As from the fold a flock of sheep comes forth, 79
 By ones, and twos, and threes, and the rest stand,
 Timidly keeping nose and eyes on earth,
 And what the foremost does the others do, 82
 Huddling themselves against her, if she stop,
 Quiet and simple, and they know not why,
 So saw I then in motion toward us come 85
 The first line of that highly favoured flock,
 Modest in mien and stately in their gait.
 Soon as the foremost of them saw upon 88
 My right, that light was broken on the ground,
 So that my shadow stretched up to the rock,
 They paused, and backward drew themselves a space : 91
 And all the rest who followed hard on them,
 Not knowing why they did so, did the same.
 "Without your asking, I confess to you, 94
 This is a human body that ye see,
 Whereby the sunlight on the earth is cleft.
 Marvel ye not hereat, but well believe, 97
 Not without Power that comes from Heaven down,
 Doth he endeavour to surmount this wall."
 Thus far the Master : and that worthy band 100
 Replied : "Turn back then, and before us pass."
 Making a signal with the hand reversed.

	165
And one of them began : " Be who thou may,	103
Going with us, turn thy face round this way ;	
Think, if thou yonder ever didst see me."	
To him I turned, and eyed him fixedly :	106
Comely he was, fair, and of noble mien,	
But of his eyebrows one a gash had cleft.	
When with all modesty I had disclaimed	109
Seeing him ever, he replied : " Now look : "	
And showed me high upon his breast a wound.	
Then with a smile he said : " Manfred am I,	112
The grandson of the Empress Costanza :	
Wherefore, when thou returnest, thee I pray,	
Unto my beauteous daughter go, who bare	115
The pride of Sicily and Aragon ;	
Tell her the truth, if men say otherwise.	
After my body by two mortal thrusts	118
Had been pierced through, I rendered up myself	
With tears to Him, Who pardoneth willingly.	
Exceeding horrible had been my sins,	121
But Goodness Infinite hath arms so wide,	
They all embrace who trust themselves to It.	
If but Cosenza's shepherd, who in chace	124
Of me was sent by Clement, in that hour	
Had duly read this passage of God's word,	
The bones of my dead body still had been	127
At Benevento by the Bridge's head,	
Beneath the keeping of the heavy cairn.	
Rains drench them now, and tempests drive them on	130
Outside the realm, hard by the Verde's banks,	
Whither he moved them with extinguished lights.	
Eternal love by malison of such	133
Is not so lost, that it cannot return,	
So long as hope retains but one green leaf.	
True is't that whoso contumacious dies	136
To Holy Church, though penitent at last,	
Rightly outside this cliff must still remain	
For all the time, told thirtyfold, that he	139

In his presumption stood, if such decree
Be shorten'd not by aid of faithful prayers,
See now if happy thou canst render me, 142
Revealing to my good Costanza how
Thou'st seen me, and what ban lies on me still,
For here through those down there much way is made." 145

CANTO IV.

Ante-Purgatory—Ascent to the First Terrace.

Position of the Sun—Character of the Mountain—The Indolent.

Belacqua.

WHEN by a pleasure, or indeed a pain,
 That seizes on some faculty of ours,
 The soul is centred on this faculty,
 It seems all powers else to disregard ; 4
 Which contradicts in fact the error that
 Believes more souls than one within us burn.
 And hence when anything is heard or seen, 7
 That keeps the soul engrossed in it alone,
 Time runs away, and one observes it not :
 For one thing is the faculty engaged, 10
 Another that the soul retains intact,
 One held as if in bonds, the other free.
 Of this I had a true experience, 13
 While wonder-struck I listened to that shade :
 For fifty full degrees had risen now
 The sun, and I had not perceived it, when 16
 We reached a point, where all those spirits cried,
 As with one voice to us : “ Here what you ask for is.”
 Larger ofttimes the gap, which on a farm 19
 The hedger mends with small forkful of thorns,
 When 'gins the grape already to embrown,
 Than was the byeway, where my leader now 22
 Went up, and I close to him, only we,
 After that band from us had gone away.
 Sanleo climb, at Noli make descent, 25
 And scale the summit of Bismantova
 On foot alone, but here a man need fly,
 On the swift wings I mean, and with the plumes 28

- Of keen desire, and following such a guide
 As gave me hope, and to my path was light.
 Upward we clambered through the broken rock ; 31
 Its walls on each side grazed us as we passed,
 Its floor beneath required both hands and feet.
 When we had reached the upmost edge at top 34
 Of the high cliff, now on the open slope,
 " O master," said I : " what way shall we take ? "
 And he to me : " Downward not e'en a step ; 37
 Ever behind me up the hill push on,
 Until for us some wise escort appears."
 The summit vanquished all the power of sight, 40
 And haughtily its side rose steeper e'en
 Than line to centre from mid-quadrant drawn,
 Weary was I, as I began to say : 43
 " Sweet Father, turn and give one look behind ;
 See, if thou stay not, I am left alone."
 " My son," said he, " but yonder drag thyself," 46
 With finger pointing me a ledge somewhat
 Above, which at that point runs round the mount.
 These words of his so spurr'd me on, that I 49
 The effort made, scrambling behind him close,
 Till 'neath my feet I found the girdling ledge.
 To sit us down we two composed ourselves, 52
 Our faces toward the East, whence we had climbed.
 For to look back delights all travellers.
 Mine eyes I turned first to the lowland shores ; 55
 Then raised them sunward, and in wonder saw
 That by him we were smitten on the left.
 Well did the Poet understand that I 58
 Found myself dazed before the Car of Light,
 As it came in 'tween us and Aquilo.
 Whereon he said, " If on that mirror now, 61
 Which up and down carries its guiding light,
 Castor and Pollux in attendance were,
 Thou then would'st see the reddened Zodiac 64
 Wheeling its course still nearer to the Bears,

If from its ancient path it have not swerved.
 How this should be, if thou wilt try to think, 67
 Inly collected, picture Sion's mount
 Together with this hill placed on the earth,
 So that they both but one horizon have, 70
 And hemispheres distinct ; and thus the path,
 To drive whereon Phaeton was poorly trained,
 Thou'lt see must needs here upon this side run, 73
 While there upon the other lies its course,
 If clearly thy intelligence takes note."
 "Truly, my Master, I have never seen " 76
 Said I, "so clearly as I now discern,
 The point where my sagacity had failed,
 That the midcircle of the heavenly course, 79
 Which in one science is Equator termed,
 And between heat and cold abideth fixed,
 For reason stated, from our standpoint here, 82
 Tends northward just as far as Hebrews saw
 It moving on towards the warmer zone.
 But if it please thee, gladly would I learn 85
 How far we still must go, for the hill mounts
 Much higher than these eyes of mine can rise.
 And he to me : "Such is this mountain, that, 88
 At starting, ever at the base 'tis hard ;
 But as man higher goes, he fares less ill.
 And when to thee it shall appear so smooth, 91
 That going up as easy is to thee,
 As sailing in a boat adown the stream,
 The end of this path thou shalt have achieved, 94
 And there for thine exhaustion look for rest.
 No more I answer ; this I know is true."
 And when he thus had ended his reply, 97
 A voice quite close to us was heard : "Perchance
 Ere then thou'lt find the need to sit thee down."
 At sound of this we both of us turned round, 100
 And on our left saw a huge block of stone,
 Of which before nor he nor I was 'ware.

Thither we drew, and people there we found 103
 Collected in the shade behind the stone,
 As when folks loll about in listlessness.
 And one of them, who very weary seemed, 106
 Was sitting down, his arms about his knees,
 Keeping his face between them very low.
 "O my sweet Lord," I said, "just cast thine eye, 109
 Here on this one, who looks more indolent
 Than if his own sister were Sloth itself."
 Then he turned round, and calmly noted us, 112
 Raising his eyes hardly above the hip ;
 "Go up thyself," he said, "brave as thou art."
 I knew then who he was, and that distress, 115
 Which left me still a little short of breath,
 Checked nowise my approach to him ; and when
 I came to him, he scarcely raised his head, 118
 Saying, "Hast thou well made out how the sun
 Directs his chariot here upon thy left?"
 His lazy attitude and curt address 121
 Just moved my lips into a little smile ;
 Then I began : "Belacqua, now for thee
 I grieve not ; but say why precisely here 124
 Thou hast thy seat ; an escort dost thou wait ?
 Or has old habit caught thee once again ?
 And he : "Brother, what boots it me to climb ? 127
 As yet no leave to meet my discipline
 God's Angel gives, who sits above the gate.
 For heaven must first so long revolve round me 130
 Outside the gate, as it did in my life,
 Since pious sighs I put off to the last,
 Unless meanwhile assisted by the prayer, 133
 That goes up from a heart that lives in grace :
 What profits other since in heaven unheard ?"
 And now before me up the Poet goes : 136
 "Forward," he says, "see how the sun hath reached
 Meridian height, and from the River's bank
 Far as Morocco, night extends her foot." 139

CANTO V.

Ante-Purgatory—The Second Terrace.

*The Careless who met a Violent Death—Two Messengers—
Jacopo del Cassero—Buonconte da Montefeltro—Pia de' Tolomei.*

ALREADY had I parted from those shades,
 And in my leader's steps was following on,
 When from behind, with finger stretched toward me,
 One cried; "Look, for 'twould seem that the sun's ray 4
 Shines not to left of him, who lower stands,
 And as a living man he seems to act."
 At sound of utterance such I turned mine eyes, 7
 And in astonishment I saw them look
 At me, me only, and the broken light.
 "Why doth thy spirit thus concern itself," 10
 The Master said "that thou should'st slacken pace?
 What is to thee the whispering of these folk?
 On after me, and let the people talk: 13
 Firm as a tower abide, of which ne'er sag
 The battlements for bluster of the wind.
 The man, in whom thought upon thought springs up, 16
 Ever puts further from himself his aim;
 The second damps the ardour of the first."
 What could I say in answer save: "I come.?" 19
 I said it somewhat with the blush suffused,
 That wins at times forgiveness for a man.
 Meanwhile along the hillside and across 22
 Our path came people somewhat in our front,
 Singing the *Miserere* verse by verse.
 When they perceived that I no place allowed 25
 For passage through my body of the rays,
 They changed their chant into a long deep "Oh!"
 And two of them in form of messengers 28

Ran forth to meet us, and enquiry sought :
 "Of your condition make us well informed."
 My Master then : "You can go back," he said, 31
 "And unto those that sent you may report,
 That this man's body is indeed of flesh.
 If when they saw his shadow, they did halt, 34
 As I opine, this answer is enough :
 Let them do honour : he may prove a friend."
 No fiery vapours have I seen so swift, 37
 Cleaving the sky in calm of early night,
 Or clouds in August when the sun goes down,
 As them, returning upward in less time. 40
 Arriving there with all the rest, they wheeled
 Towards us, like cavalry with loosened rein.
 "A great assemblage this, that presseth on, 43
 And with some prayer they come," the Poet said ;
 "Wherefore go on, and listen as thou go'st."
 "O Soul, that movest on to happiness 46
 With the same limbs wherewith thou first wast born,"
 Cried they advancing, "stay awhile thy steps.
 Look if of us thou e'er hast any seen, 49
 So that of him news yonder thou may'st bear.
 Ah ! wherefore going on ? wilt thou not stay ?
 By violence we all were done to death, 52
 And sinners were we to our latest hour :
 E'en then a light from heaven instructed us ;
 So that repenting and forgiving both, 55
 From life we issued reconciled to God,
 Who with desire to see Him drives us on."
 "Although into your faces I have looked " 58
 I said, "none do I know ; but, an ye please,
 What I can do, ye spirits of new birth,
 Tell me, and I will do it by that peace, 61
 Of which in steps of my appointed guide,
 From world to world I go in careful search."
 And one began : "Each of us here confides 64
 In thy good service, and without a pledge,

If but "I cannot," cut not off "I will."
 And therefore I alone before the rest 67
 Pray thee, if ever thou that country see,
 Which 'twixt Romagna lies and Carlo's land,
 That, thou for me be gracious with thy prayers 70
 In Fano, so due rites may there be done,
 That I may purge away my heavy sins.
 From thence I came; but the deep wounds, from which 73
 Ebb'd out the blood that was my life, were struck
 Within the shelter of Antenor's sons,
 Where above all I deemed myself secure; 76
 The man of Estè prompted to the deed,
 Enraged with me more than was justly due.
 Yet had I made my flight but Mira-wards, 79
 When I at Oriago was o'erta'en,
 I should be still where men draw life in breath.
 To the lagoon I ran, and reeds and bog 82
 Entangling me, I fell; and there I saw
 Form on the ground a pool from out my veins."
 Then said another: "So may accomplish'd be 85
 The wish that draws thee to this lofty mount,
 In pity help me to achieve my own.
 Buonconte I, of Montefeltro once: 88
 For me Giovanna cares not; nor the rest;
 And so with these I tramp with downcast brow."
 And I to him: "What force or evil chance 91
 From Campaldino led thee so astray,
 That never hath thy burial place been known?"
 "Ah!" he replied, "at Casentino's foot 94
 A stream named Archiano runs, with springs
 Above the Hermitage i' th' Apennines;
 There, where this river loses first its name, 97
 Did I arrive, transfixèd in the throat,
 Flying afoot, and weltering o'er the plain.
 The powers of vision failed me there; and speech 100
 In name of Mary ceased; and in that spot
 I fell, and nothing save my flesh remained.

The truth I'll tell, repeat it where men live ;	103
God's Angel caught me, and the fiend of hell	
Yell'd out : ' Why sent from heaven to cheat me thus ?	
Thou bearest off the eternal part of him	106
For one poor tear, that snatches him from me :	
This other part I'll deal with otherwise.'	
Thou knowest well how in the air collects	109
That humid vapour which to water turns,	
Soon as it rises, now by cold condensed.	
That evil will, which only evil seeks,	112
He joined with cunning, stirring mist and wind,	
Through the prerogative his nature gave.	
Then when the day was spent, the vale he wrapped	115
From Pratomagno to the mountain range	
In fog ; the sky above he clouded o'er,	
So that the pregnant air to water changed :	118
Down fell the rain, and to the runlets came	
So much of it, as earth could not retain :	
And as it mingled with the mightier streams,	121
Towards the Royal River with such speed	
It headlong rushed, that nought could stay its course.	
Impetuous Archian above its fall	124
My frozen body found, and swept it on	
Towards Arno, loosening on my breast the Cross	
I made of me, when Agony set in ;	127
Rolled me along the banks and depths below ;	
Then with its wreckage girt and covered me."	
" Ah ! when unto the world thou hast returned,	130
And from thy tedious journey rested well,"	
After the second spirit said a third,	
" Recall me to thee, me La Pia named :	133
Siena made me, Maremma unmade me ;	
As well he knows, who wedded with his ring	
Me, whom another had before espoused.	136

CANTO VI.

*Ante-Purgatory—Second Terrace.**The careless who met a Violent Death. Sordello.*

WHEN from a game of hazard men break up,
 The loser in vexation stays behind,
 Repeats the throws and a sad lesson learns ;
 But with the winner off go all the rest ; 4
 One walks in front, one plucks his gown behind,
 One at his side would recognition claim.
 He tarries not ; listens to this and that ; 7
 They crowd no more to whom he gives his hand,
 And from the crush he thus protects himself.
 So did I find myself in that dense crowd, 10
 This way and that, turning my face to them,
 And by a promise getting clear away.
 There was the Aretin, who from the arm 13
 Of grim Ghin Tacco his death-blow received ;
 The other too who in hot chase was drowned.
 There in entreaty stood with outspread palms 16
 Frederic Novello, and the Pisau, who
 Made good Marzucco show his fortitude.
 I saw Count Orso ; and the soul divorced 19
 From its own body by an envious hate
 He said ; and not for any deed of guilt ;
 Pier della Brosse I mean ; and, while on earth, 22
 The Lady of Brabant should well provide
 That she therefore do not a worse herd join.
 Freed altogether from this band of shades, 25
 Whose only prayer was for the prayer of friends
 That they the sooner might be changed to Saints,
 Myself began : “Light of my soul, to me 28

- Thou seem'st in one text plainly to deny,
 That heaven's decree can bend to mortal prayer,
 And yet for this alone these people pray. 31
 Can then it be that this their hope is vain?
 Or are thy words by me ill understood?"
 And he to me: "That which I wrote is plain; 34
 And as for these their hope deceives them not,
 If with a sound mind thou consider well.
 For Justice is not from her height abased, 37
 When in one moment fire of love fills up
 All that each inmate here must satisfy.
 And in the place where I laid down this point, 40
 Defect could not by prayer amended be,
 Because the suppliant was not one with God.
 Indeed on speculation high as this 43
 No judgment form, if she to thee speak not,
 Who light will be 'twixt truth and intellect.
 I know not if thou understand; I speak 46
 Of Beatrice: her thou wilt see above,
 Smiling, and blessèd on this mountain's top."
 "My Lord," said I, "On quickly let us haste, 49
 I am not weary, as I was erewhile;
 And see; e'en now the hill a shadow casts."
 "On we will push, long as the daylight lasts," 52
 He answered, "far as we shall be allowed.
 But other than thou thinkest stands the case.
 Before thou gain the height, thou'lt see return 55
 Him, whom the hill already hides from view,
 So that his rays thou dost not intercept.
 But yonder see a soul, who sits alone, 58
 Quite by himself, whose looks toward us are turned.
 He will instruct us of the shortest way."
 To him we came: O soul, true Lombard born, 61
 How lofty was thine air, and nobly proud;
 Thine eye slow moving, calm in dignity!
 No word of any kind did he vouchsafe; 64
 Approach allowed only with watchful eye,

As might a lion couchant at his rest.
 Still Virgil drew towards him with request, 67
 That he would show to us the best ascent :
 To this enquiry he did not reply ;
 But of our country and our mode of life 70
 He asked. My gentle leader had begun :
 " Mantua "—and the shade till then self-wrapped,
 Towards him rose from where he was before ; 73
 " O Mantuan," said he, " I Sordello am,
 Of thine own land." And one the other clasped.
 Ah servile Italy, a hostelry of woe, 76
 Ship without pilot in a mighty storm,
 No queen of nations, but a bordel thou !
 So promptly eager was this noble soul, 79
 At the sweet sound of his own land alone,
 To give his countryman a welcome there !
 And now thy living sons within thee are 82
 Ne'er without war ; one on the other preys ;
 E'en they, whom the same wall and moat enclose.
 Search, wretched land, thy cities round the shores 85
 Of thy whole seaboard, and then inland turn ;
 See if one spot there be, that peace makes glad,
 What boots it that Justinian did for thee 88
 The bridle mend, if void the saddle be ?
 Without him surely had thy shame been less.
 Ah ! ye who should a pious people be, 91
 And Cæsar leave firm in the saddle set,
 If well ye read what God prescribes to you,
 Mark how this beast hath fierce and fell become, 94
 No longer now corrected by the spur,
 Since on the bridle ye did lay the hand.
 Albert of Germany, who in neglect 97
 Dost leave the horse intractable and wild,
 Which in the saddle thou should'st have bestrode,
 May judgment fall in justice from the stars, 100
 Wondrous and manifest upon thy seed,
 Such as may terrify thy successor.

- For in your greed engrossed of lands beyond 103
 The Alps, thou and thy father have allowed
 The garden of the Empire to lie waste.
- Come see the Montagus and Capulets, 106
 Monaldi, Filippeschi too; in gricf
 Are those; these full of fear, thou reckless man.
- Come cruel one, come and th' oppression see 109
 Of thine own chiefs; their outrages redress;
 And see withal how safe is Sanfior.
- Rome too, that is thine own, see in her tears, 112
 Widowed, alone, as day and night she cries;
 "My Cæsar, why thus absent from my side?"
- Come, see what love among thy people dwells; 115
 And if no pity for us stir thy soul,
 O come for very shame of thy repute.
- If lawful 'tis for me, O God, most High, 118
 Who upon earth wast crucified for us.
 Why are Thine eyes of Justice turned elsewhere?
- Or is it preparation made in depths 121
 Of thine own counsel for some good, which is
 From our perception utterly cut off;
- For cities all of Italy are full 124
 Of tyrant lords, and a Marcellus now
 Each boor is hailed, that shouts a party cry.
- Fircnze mine, well mayst thou be content 127
 With this digression that concerns thee not;
 Thanks to the prudence of thy people's plans.
- In many hearts is Justice found, her shaft 130
 Held back, till counsel shall discharge the bow:
 But with thy sons on the tongue's tip she sits.
- Many refuse the load of public cares; 133
 But eagerly thy citizens respond,
 Uncalled, and shout: "Set it upon my back."
- Rejoice then now, good cause thou hast indeed! 136
 Wealthy thou art; peace and sound sense are thine.
 That I speak truth, the facts make evident.
- Athens and Lacedemon, which did frame 139

The ancient laws, well versed in civil arts,
Of upright living gave but the mere hint,
Compared with thee, who dost thy policy 142
So finely spin, that of October's web
In mid November nothing hath survived.
How oft within the time thou canst thyself 145
Recall, coinage and office, custom, laws
Hast thou reformed, thy citizens renewed !
If thou recall, and have the light to see, 148
Thy likeness thou wilt find in that sick girl,
Who upon downy pillow finds no rest,
But parries pain shifting from side to side. 151

CANTO VII.

*Ante-Purgatory—The Sweet Valley—
Princes set on Earthly Glory.*

AFTER their stately greetings with much joy
 Had been repeated three and four times o'er,
 Sordello, drawing back, said: "Who are ye?"
 "Or ever to this hill had souls been sent, 4
 Accounted worthy to ascend to God,
 My bones were buried by Octavian.
 Virgil am I, and for no other sin 7
 Did I lose heav'n, than for the lack of faith."
 Such answer then my leader made to him.
 As one who something suddenly perceives 10
 In front of him, and wonderstruck believes,
 Then doubts again, says, "'tis, no, it is not,"
 Such did he seem, and then with brow bent low, 13
 Returning to him in humility,
 He clasped him where a servant would embrace:
 "O Glory of the Latin race," he said, 16
 By whom our tongue its fullest power displayed;
 Eternal glory of my native place!
 What merit, or what grace shows thee to me? 19
 If I be worthy words of thine to hear,
 Say if thou come from hell, and from which ward."
 "Through all the circles of the doleful realm," 22
 He answered him, "hither am I arrived:
 Virtue from heaven moved me; by it I come.
 Not for deeds done, but left undone, have I 25
 Lost sight of that high Sun, which thou dost crave,
 And which too late by me was understood.
 A place there is down there, not dismal made 28

- By torment, only dark, where our laments
 Sound not in groans, but only breathe in sighs.
 There I abide with little innocents, 31
 Caught by the fangs of death, or ever they
 From common guilt of man had been set free.
 There I abide 'mong such as ne'er were clothed 34
 In the three holy Graces; but the rest
 They knew without defect, and practised all.
 But if thou know, and may, some guidance give 37
 To us, how we more quickly may arrive
 Where Purgatory truly first begins."
 Said he: "No limit here for us is set; 40
 Upward and round am I allowed to pass;
 As guide I join thee far as I may go.
 But see already how the day declines; 43
 Impossible by night is all ascent,
 'Twere well we think then of some fair retreat.
 Souls are there in retirement on our right: 46
 If thou consent, thee will I lead to them,
 And to know them will no displeasure be."
 "But how is this?" was then the answer, "if 49
 One wish to mount by night, would he be stopped
 By others, or unable find himself?"
 And good Sordello then his fingers rubbed 52
 Along the ground, saying: "This line alone
 Thou couldst not cross after the sun were down:
 Not that aught else an obstacle would raise 55
 To thy ascent, save the dark cloud of night,
 Which with "Thou canst not" doth enthrall "I would."
 Thou mightest well through it descend below, 58
 And take thy walk, rambling around the hill,
 Long as the horizon keeps the day shut out."
 My lord thereon in wonderment replied: 61
 "Then lead us to the point, where thou dost say
 We may enjoyment find, while thus delayed."
 A little distance had we thence removed, 64
 When I observed the mountain hollowed out,

- As hollowed out are valleys down below,
 "Yonder," that shade said then, "will we repair, 67
 Where of itself the hillside forms a lap,
 And there will we await the day's return."
 A winding path, not level yet not steep, 70
 Led us along the margin of the glen
 To where the edge dies more than half away.
 Gold and fine silver, scarlet and dead white, 73
 The wood of India, lustrous and serene,
 And emerald fresh, as when it first is split,
 These, in that dell if placed, in colour would 76
 Be by its grass and flowers as far surpassed,
 As by its greater is the less o'ercome.
 Nor was this painting nature's only work ; 79
 But of the perfume of a thousand scents
 She made a mingled sweetness never known.
 Shades I beheld, who seated on the sward 82
 Amid the flowers *Salve Regina* sang,
 Invisable to those outside the vale.
 "Before the fading sun sinks to his rest." 85
 Began the Mantuan, who had led us there,
 "Wish not among those spirits to be brought.
 Here from this terrace will you better note, 88
 In act and feature, the assembly there,
 Than welcomed by them in the glade below :
 He who sits highest, and like one appears, 91
 Who failed in duty that he should have done,
 And whose lips move not with the other's song,
 The Emperor Rudolph was ; he, who might once 94
 Have healed the wounds that Italy have slain,
 Whom to revive another slowly comes.
 The next, who by his look doth comfort him, 97
 Once ruled the land from whence the waters spring,
 Which Moldaw bears to Elbe, Elbe to the Sea.
 His name was Ottocar ; in swaddling clothes 100
 Far better he, than bearded Wenceslas,
 His son, pampered in ease and luxury.

- He with small nose, who seems in counsel close 103
 With him who bears the aspect so benign,
 Deflowering his own lily, fell in flight.
- Behold him there, how on his breast he smites. 106
 The other mark, who for his cheek hath made
 Amidst his sighs a bed of his own palm.
- Father, and father-in-law of him, who is 109
 The curse of France, they know his vicious life,
 And foul ; thence comes the grief that pierces them.
- He, who displays that stalwart frame, and who 112
 Attunes his song with him of manly nose,
 Was with the cord of every virtue girt.
- And if the youth had after him remained 115
 As King, who in the back ground takes his seat,
 From vase to vase well had that virtue passed ;
- Which cannot of the other heirs be said. 118
 Frederick and Giacomo the kingdoms hold,
 But neither shares the better heritage.
- For seldom in the branches sprouts again 121
 The probity of man ; such is His Will
 Who gives it, that from Him it may be sought.
- Again to yon huge nose my words apply, 124
 (As too to Piero, who sings with him,)
 For whom Apulia and Provence do mourn.
- So much the plant is meaner than its seed, 127
 As more than Beatrice and Margaret can,
 Costanza of her husband still may boast.
- See how the monarch of the simple life, 130
 Harry of England, yonder sits alone :
 He in his branches nobler issue hath.
- He, who 'mong them sits humbly on the ground, 133
 With eyes upraised, is William the Margrave,
 For whose sake Allessandria and her war
 Cause Monferrat and Canavese their tears. 136

- Their garments were, which, with their pinions green
 Wafted and waving, they trailed after them.
- One took his post a little o'er our heads ; 31
 One 'lighted on the bank just opposite,
 So that between the two the people stood.
- I well discerned the fair locks of the head, 34
 But in their faces baffled was mine eye,
 As faculty confounded by excess.
- "From Mary's bosom hither they both come," 37
 Sordello said, "as guardians of the dell
 Against the serpent that will soon appear."
- Whereupon I, who knew not by what path, 40
 Turned me about, and frozen in alarm
 Up to the trusty shoulders closely drew.
- Again Sordello spake : "Descend we now 43
 'Mong the great shades, and we will talk with them :
 To see you will to them most grateful be."
- Only three steps, I think, did I descend, 46
 And stood below ; and one I saw, who gazed
 On me, as though he would acquaintance claim.
- Already now the air was dark'ning o'er, 49
 But not so dark, that 'tween his eyes and mine
 Could not be seen what had before been hid.
- Towards me he made his way, and I toward him : 52
 O Nino, noble Judge, how glad was I
 To see that thou wert not among the lost.
- No kindly greeting 'tween us left unsaid, 55
 Inquired he then : "How long since thou arrived
 O'er the far waters at the mountain foot ?"
- "Oh ! from the haunts of woe this morning 'twas 58
 I came," said I, "and in the first life still,
 That I may yet as pilgrim win the next."
- And when mine answer to him thus was heard, 61
 He and Sordello starting back retired,
 As folk, whom something suddenly confounds.
- The one to Virgil turned, the other to a shade 64
 There seated, with a cry, "Up, Conrad up ;

Come see what God most graciously hath willed."

Then turned to me : " By that rare favour, which 67
 Thou ow'st to Him, who hideth aye so deep
 His first Wherefore, that no ford leads to it,
 When cross the wide waves thou shalt yonder be, 70
 Bid my Giovanna there to pray for me,
 Whence to the innocent an answer comes.

I think her mother loves me now no more 73
 Since the white weeds of mourning she hath changed,
 The which poor soul she needs must yet desire.

Easy it is from her to understand 76
 How long in woman burns the fire of love,
 When fed no more by sight and oft embrace.

No funeral pomp for her the Viper will 79
 Provide that leads the Milanese afield ;
 Such as Gallura's Cock would have arrayed."

Such words he spake, marked plainly with the stamp 82
 Upon his features of that upright zeal,
 Which in due measure sets a heart aglow.

My greedy eyes now turned towards Heaven alone, 85
 There only, where the stars the slowest turn,
 As nearest to the axle rolls the wheel.

My leader then : " My son, what dost thou see 88
 Up there?" and I to him : " Those torches three,
 With which this hither pole is all ablaze."

And he to me : " The four resplendent stars 91
 Thou didst this morning see have yonder sunk,
 And these have risen where the others were."

As thus he spake, Sordello drew him close, 94
 Saying : " Behold our adversary there,"
 And with his finger pointing where to look ;

Upon the side, where no embankment girds 97
 The little valley, lay a serpent ; such
 Perchance as gave to Eve the bitter fruit.

Amid the grass and flowers with baneful trail 100
 The reptile came, turning anon its head
 To lick its back, like beast that smooths itself.

- I did not see, and therefore cannot tell 103
 How the celestial eagles 'gan to move
 But when in motion well I saw them both.
- Hearing their green wings as they cleft the air, 106
 The serpent fled ; the angels wheeling round
 Up to their posts returned in even flight.
- The shade which to the Judge's side had drawn, 109
 Prompt at his call, throughout the whole attack
 Not for a moment ceased to gaze on me.
- "So may the torch that guideth thee on high 112
 Find in thy resolution so much wax,
 As needed is to reach the enamelled height,"
- Thus he began ; "if veritable news 115
 Of Valdimacra, or its neighbourhood
 Thou know, tell me, for there I once was great.
- Corrado Malaspina was my name ; 118
 Not the old man am I : but sprung from him :
 Mine own I loved with love here purified.
- "Oh !" said I to him, "through those lands of yours 121
 I never passed ; but where dwells there a man
 To whom through Europe's range they are unknown ?
- The glory which brings honour to your house, 124
 Proclaims its lords, proclaims its countryside,
 So that one knows it, who was never there.
- To you I swear, so may I upward mount, 127
 That in your honoured race no tarnish soils
 The lustre of its purse, nor of its sword.
- Nature and nurture have endowed it so, 130
 Albeit the guilty head pervert the world,
 It only keeps the right, and scorns the wrong."
- And he : "Now go ; not seventimes more the sun 133
 Shall to the bed return, which the Great Ram
 With all his four feet covers and bestrides,
- Ere thy opinion, courteous thus and kind, 136
 Shall in the middle of thy head be nailed
 With stronger nails than words of any man,
 Unless the course of Justice cease to run." 139

CANTO IX.

*Ante-Purgatory—The Sweet Valley—Dante's Dream—
The Eagle and Lucia—The Gate of Purgatory—
The Angel Janitor.*

THE concubine of old Tithonus now
 Upon the Eastern terrace glimmer'd white,
 Forth from the arms of her sweet paramour :
 Her forehead gleamed with light of jewels, set 4
 In form of the chill reptile that with sting
 Of tail envenomed smites the nations through :
 And of the steps wherewith the night ascends, 7
 Where we were standing, she had taken two,
 And now the third began to droop its wings ;
 When I, who in me so much Adam had, 10
 O'ercome by sleep, sank down upon the grass,
 Just where the five of us together sat.
 About the hour when now her plaintive lay 13
 The little swallow 'gins, as morning dawns,
 Perchance in mem'ry of her former woes,
 And when on pilgrimage our mind goes forth 16
 Farthest from flesh, and hampered least by thought,
 Prophetic almost in its visions then,
 An eagle in the sky appeared in dream, 19
 Hovering above me with her plumes of gold,
 And wings outspread, as ready for the swoop ;
 And for myself it seemed that I was there, 22
 Where Ganymede abandoned his own friends,
 Borne off to the Consistory above.
 I thought within me that perchance of wont 25
 She stoops but here, and from elsewhere disdains
 To carry in her talons aught aloft.
 Me seemed that after wheeling round awhile, 28

Downward she swooped, as lightning terrible,
 And bore me off far as the sphere of fire.
 There she and I were burning, as it seemed, 31
 And the imagined furnace scorched me so,
 Need was that broken should my slumber be.
 Not otherwise Achilles shook himself, 34
 Rolling his wakened eyes in survey round,
 And knowing nothing of the place he'd reached,
 When in his mother's arms from Chiron's care 37
 He was to Scyros borne away asleep,
 From whence the Greeks removed him afterwards,
 Than I did shake myself, as from my face 40
 Sleep fled away, and pale I grew as death,
 Like one whose blood in terror turns to ice.
 There by my side stood my sole comforter ; 43
 More than two hours the sun had risen now,
 And to the open sea my face was turned.
 "Be not afraid," the Elder said to me, 46
 "Be reassured ; a good point we have reached :
 Restrain not, but redouble all thy force :
 At Purgatory art thou now arrived : 49
 See there the parapet that girds it round ;
 See there the entrance where yon rift appears.
 Just now at flush of dawn preceding day, 52
 While within thee thy soul was wrapped in sleep
 Upon the flowers, which down there deck the ground,
 A Lady came ; "Lucia I," she said ; 55
 "This sleeper let me take into my arms,
 So will I make his journey easier."
 Sordello stayed, and th' other noble forms : 58
 She raised thee up, and as day clearer grew,
 Hither she rose, I following in her wake.
 Here did she set thee down, but first to me 61
 Her beauteous eyes yon open entrance showed.
 Then she and sleep together went away."
 Like one in doubt, who reassures himself, 64
 And who for confidence exchanges fear,

Soon as the truth hath been to him made plain,
 I too was changed; and as my Leader saw 67
 Me free from care, up o'er the slope above
 He moved, and I behind him towards the height.
 Reader, thou seest well how I exalt 70
 My theme; and if with greater art I seek
 To underprop its weight, be not surprised.
 Nearer we drew, and at a point arrived, 73
 Where what at first no greater had appeared
 Than fissure in a wall that starts away,
 I saw to be a gateway, by three steps 76
 Approached below, each of a diverse tint;
 A warder too, who spake not yet a word;
 And as I opened more and more mine eyes, 79
 I saw him seated on the topmost step,
 Of aspect such I dared not look upon him,
 A naked sword too in his hand he held, 82
 Which so reflected the sun's rays on us,
 That oft toward him in vain I turned my eyes.
 "Tell me, where there you stand, what is your will," 85
 So did his speech begin, "The escort where?
 Beware that this ascent work you no hurt."
 "From heaven a Lady," said my Master, "skilled 88
 In all these things, but a few hours ago
 Spake to us thus: Go up, the gate is there."
 "And to your good may she advance your steps," 91
 Began the courteous Janitor again;
 "So forward to these steps of ours advance."
 Thither we came unto the first step, which 94
 Of marble was, white, smooth and polished so,
 That mirror'd in it I my likeness saw.
 The second was in tint darker than perse, 97
 Compact of small stones, rough and scorched by fire,
 With cracks athwart it in its length and breadth.
 The third, which rested ponderously at top, 100
 Of porphyry me-thought it, fiery red,
 Like blood, which from a vein spurts freshly forth.

- On this God's Angel rested both his feet, 103
 Seated the while upon the threshold floor,
 Which seemed to me a block of adamant.
 Up the three steps, and with my hearty will, 106
 My Leader drew me, saying : " Thy request
 Make humbly, that the bolt may be withdrawn."
 Devout I cast me at the holy feet. 109
 In mercy's name I prayed him ope to me :
 But first upon the breast I smote me thrice.
 A *P* upon my brow he seven times traced 112
 With the sword's point. " Give heed that thou do wash
 These wounds, when once thou art within," he said.
 Ashes, or earth which has been dug out dry, 115
 Would of one colour with his garment be,
 From 'neath the folds of which he drew two keys.
 Of gold the one, silver the other was : 118
 First with the white, and with the yellow next
 He plied the door, so that I was content.
 " Whenever faileth either of these keys, 121
 So that it turns not rightly in the lock,"
 Said he to us, " this passage opens not.
 More precious is the one ; but th' other needs 124
 Discernment and much skill ere it unlocks ;
 For this is it which must untie the knot.
 From Peter I hold both ; he bade me err 127
 Rather in opening than in keeping shut,
 If only at my feet men humbly kneel."
 The wicket of the holy portal he 130
 Thrust back ; " Enter," he said, " but be assured
 That forth departs, whoever looketh back."
 And when upon their hinges were swung round 133
 The swivels of that consecrated gate,
 Which are of metal resonant and strong,
 Tarpeia did not roar so loud, nor show 136
 Herself so shrill, when good Metellus thence
 Was dragged, and lean and hungry she was left.
 Attentive turned to the first thunder roll, 139

Te Deum Laudamus I seemed to catch
In vocal strain mingled with dulcet notes.
What I then heard the impress reproduced 142
In me, precisely such as oft is formed,
When with the organs men stand up and sing,
And now the words are heard, and now are not. 145

CANTO X.

*The First Circle—Pride—The Ascent—
Examples of Humility—Expiation of Pride.*

WHEN now within the threshold of the gate
 Which souls use seldom, by an evil love
 Misled, that makes the crooked path seem straight,
 By its loud slam I knew that it was closed : 4
 And had I then turned back mine eyes toward it,
 For error such what had been fit excuse ?
 We mounted, climbing through a hollowed rock, 7
 Which shifted zigzag out from either side,
 Somewhat as wave that flows and ebbs again.
 " Here is there need to use a little skill," 10
 Began my guide, " in keeping ourselves close
 Now here, now there to the retiring side."
 This made our steps so tardy and so short, 13
 That now the waning moon already had
 Regained her bed, once more to take her rest,
 Ere we had issued from that needle's eye : 16
 But when above, open and free, we reached
 A point, where sloping back the cliff recedes,
 Myself worn out, uncertain both of us 19
 Which way to turn, upon a level road,
 More lonely than a desert track, we paused.
 From edge of this, where borders it on space, 22
 To foot of the high cliff, which sheer ascends,
 Might be three times the measure of a man :
 And far as eye could forward wing its flight, 25
 Now to the right, and now upon the left,
 This ledge seemed to me uniform in breadth.
 We had not yet upon it moved a foot, 28
 When I observed the circle of the cliff,
 Which, perpendicular, cut off ascent,

- To be of whitest marble, and adorned 31
 With bas-reliefs, that there would put to shame
 Not Polycletus, but e'en Nature's self.
- The Angel, who to earth with warrant came 34
 Of peace, which, sought for many a year with tears,
 Re-opened Heaven, freed from the ancient ban,
 Before us showed so truthfully in form 37
 Incised there, in attitude so sweet,
 That he no silent portraiture displayed ;
 But one had sworn : Surely he saith "*Ave*," 40
 Such the resemblance imaged forth of Her,
 Who turned the key to open Love on high.
 And in her gesture was the legend stamped 43
Ecce ancilla Dei, as exact
 As is a figure upon wax impressed.
 "Keep not the mind set on one spot alone," 46
 Said the sweet Master, as I stood by him
 On that side where with men the heart is found ;
 Whereon I shifted my regard, and saw 49
 In rear of Mary and upon that side
 Where in respect of me my Leader stood,
 Another story graven on the rock ; 52
 Virgil I therefore passed, and closer drew,
 So that for view it might be well in sight.
 There chiselled in the self same marble were 55
 The cart and holy Ark by oxen drawn,
 Dread warning 'gainst an office self imposed.
 In front were people seen, who, one and all, 58
 In seven choirs grouped, of my two senses made
 The one say " No," the other " Yes, they sing."
 And the smoke too from out the thuribles 61
 Depicted there, made nose and eyes at once
 In no and yes divergent judgment give.
 Going before the consecrated shrine 64
 There did the humble Psalmist dance, high girt ;
 And more and less than King he shewed herein.
 In face of him Michal, in outline seen, 67

- As from a palace window she looked forth,
 In wonder gazed, disdainful and displeased.
 I moved my feet away from where I stood, 70
 Better to scrutinize another scene,
 Which behind Michal gleamed on me in white.
 And there was chronicled the glorious tale 73
 Of that great Roman Prince, by whose desert
 Was Gregory stirred to his high victory :
 'Tis of the Emperor Trajan that I speak ; 76
 And at his bridle a poor widow stood,
 Displayed in attitude of grief and tears.
 Around him the space seemed trampled by throngs 79
 Of knights and horses ; eagles wrought in gold
 Were seen above him waving in the wind.
 The wretched woman in the midst of these, 82
 " My Sovran," seemed to say, " Vengeance grant me
 For a slain son, who fills my heart with grief."
 And he appeared to answer her : " Wait yet, 85
 Till I return again : " My lord," said she,
 As one whom anguish maketh bold to speak,
 " If thou return not ? " He : " Who fills my place, 88
 Will do it then." And she : " Others' good deeds
 What gain to thee, if thou forget thine own ? "
 And he : " Take comfort then, for meet it is, 91
 Before I stir, my duty I discharge ;
 Justice demands, and pity bids me halt."
 He in whose sight nothing is ever new, 94
 Himself produced this speech made visible,
 New but to us, since 'tis not found on earth.
 While I, enraptured with delight, beheld 97
 These portraits of so great humility,
 And for the Artist's sake so dear to view ;
 " See on this side, though with but tardy steps," 100
 Whispered the Poet, " numerous people come :
 They to the stair aloft will speed our way."
 Mine eyes, that in their gaze were on the stretch 103
 To see new things, wherein is their delight,

- To turn around towards him were not slow.
 Yet Reader, I would not thou turn aside 106
 From aught thou purpose well, because thou hear'st
 How God doth will that debt should be discharged.
 Attend not to the form of suffering : 109
 Think what comes afterwards ; think that at worst,
 Beyond the great doomsday it cannot run.
 " My Master," I began, " what I perceive 112
 Moving toward us, seems not to me like men ;
 What 'tis I know not, so confused my sight."
 And he to me : " The grievous circumstance 115
 Of torment here so crusheth them to earth,
 That mine own eyes at first were sorely strained.
 But closer look, and disentangle with 118
 Thy sight what underneath those stones draws nigh ;
 Thou now canst see each smiting on his breast."
 O ye proud Christians, wretched and worn out, 121
 Who in the feeble foresight of your minds
 Have set your trust upon a backward course,
 Perceive ye not that we are only worms, 124
 Born to become the angelic butterfly,
 That without subterfuge to Judgment soars ?
 Why thus inflated floats your soul aloft, 127
 When but defective insects are ye all,
 And short of full perfection like the grub ?
 As to sustain a ceiling or a roof, 130
 For corbel a man's figure sometimes serves,
 And shows the knees contracted to the chest,
 Whereat the untrue causes true concern 133
 To spring in whoso sees it, even such
 Did I see them, as I the closer looked.
 True is it they were more or less bowed down, 136
 As on their backs they bore or more or less ;
 Yet he who had most patience in his mien,
 Seemed to sob forth in tears, " I can no more." 139

CANTO XI.

*The First Circle—Pride—A Prayer.
Humbert of Santifiore—Oderisi d' Agubbio.
Provenzan Salvani.*

“O THOU, our Father, which in heaven art,
Not there confined, but in the greater love
Thou hast for Thy first handiwork above,
Praised be Thy Name and Thy Almightyness 4
By every creature, as tis' meet indeed
To render thanks to Thy sweet effluence.
Grant that Thy kingdom's Peace to us may come, 7
For we to it can ne'er ourselves attain
With all our powers, if it come not to us ;
As of their own free will Thine Angels make 10
To Thee an offering with Hosannas sung,
So may mankind of their's another make.
Give us this day the Manna of to-day, 13
Withouten which through this rude wilderness
He backward falls, who toils most to advance.
And as for ill that others do to us 16
We forgive each, to us in mercy grant
Forgiveness, and regard not our deserts.
Our virtue, which so soon is beaten down, 19
Put not to trial with the ancient foe,
But set us free from him, who galls it sore.
This last petition for ourselves, dear Lord, 22
We make not now, because we need it not,
But for all those, whom we have left behind.”
A prosperous course thus for themselves and us 25
Those shades did pray, moving beneath a load,
Like th' incubus we sometimes feel in dreams ;
Not all in equal pain and weariness, 28
As on the first ledge round and round they pace,
Purging away the black smoke of the world.
If yonder good prayers aye for us are said, 31

- What cannot here be said or done for them
 By such as have the root of a good will ?
 Well ought we then to help wash out the stains, 34
 Which they bore hence, so that agile and clean
 They may pass forth into the starry spheres.
 " Ah ! so may righteousness and mercy soon 37
 Disburthen you, enabling you to wing
 A speedy flight whither your longings yearn,
 Show on which side towards the stair above 40
 The path is shortest, and if more than one,
 That teach, which with the easier steep inclines ;
 For he who comes with me beneath the load 43
 Of Adam's flesh, wherein he still is clothed,
 In this ascent, against his will, is slow."
 Their words, which came in answer unto these 46
 Spoken by him, whose steps I waited on,
 From whom proceeding were not manifest ;
 But I heard say : " To right along the bank 49
 In company with us you'll find the pass
 Available for living man to scale ;
 And were I not encumbered with this stone, 52
 Which doth my proud neck in abasement bend,
 So that needs must I bear my visage low,
 On him who liveth, but tells not his name, 55
 I fain would look, to see if I know him,
 And make him of my load compassionate.
 Latian I was, a noble Tuscan's son ; 58
 My father, William Aldobrandesco
 I know not if his name e'er came to you.
 My ancient blood and all the knightly deeds 61
 Of my forefathers bred such arrogance,
 That heeding not the mother of us all,
 I bore myself so scornfully to men 64
 That death came thence, as know the Sieneſe,
 And ev'ry boy in Campagnatico.
 Humbert am I : and not to me alone 67
 Is pride my loss, for all my kindred too

- Hath it dragged with it to calamity.
 And here for it must I this weight endure, 70
 Until to God the compensation's made
 Amid the dead, which living I made not."
 And as I listened with my head bowed low, 73
 One of the shades, not he that spake with me,
 Twisted him 'neath the weight that hampers him,
 And saw, and knew me, and gave forth a cry, 76
 Keeping his eyes with effort fixed on me,
 Who all bowed down was walking by their side.
 "Ah! Oderisi," said I, "is it thou, 79
 Agubbio's honour, honour of the art,
 Which Paris now Illumination styles?"
 "Brother," said he, "more brightly smile the leaves, 82
 Which Franco Bolognese's pencil paints:
 Full honour now is his, but partial mine.
 And not indeed thus courteous had I been, 85
 While that I lived, so great was the desire
 Of eminence on which my heart was set.
 For all such pride the forfeit here is paid, 88
 And even here I should not be, but that
 While able still to sin, I turned to God.
 O the vain glory of all human power, 91
 How shortlived is the green leaf of thy wreath,
 Unless an age of grosser taste ensue!
 In painting Cimabue used to think 94
 He held the field; Giotto is now the cry,
 So that the other's fame is overcast.
 One Guido likewise from the other takes 97
 The fame of letters, and perhaps is born
 Some one that from the nest shall thrust them both.
 The uproar of the world is but a puff 100
 Of wind, which blows now this way, and now that,
 Changing its name, its quarter as it shifts.
 What greater fame for thee, if in old age 103
 Thou shed thy flesh, than hadst thou died ere yet
Daddy and *Geegee* thou had'st dropped, when pass

- A thousand years which, to eternity,
 Are shorter far than twinkling of an eye
 To slowest circle that in heaven revolves,
 With him, who here takes up so little road
 In front of me, all Tuscany once rang ;
 To-day Siena hardly breathes his name,
 Where he was lord, what time was overthrown
 Florentine fury, which in its height of pride
 Stood at that day, as prostituted now.
 Your high renown is coloured like the grass ;
 It comes and goes, and he its verdure steals,
 By whom it springs in freshness from the soil.”
 And I to him : “ Thy truthful words plant in
 My heart humility, and pride abase :
 But who is he of whom thou spak’st but now ? ”
 He answered : “ Provenzàn Salvani he ;
 And he is here, in that he did presume
 To his own hands Siena to reduce.
 Thus hath he gone, and without respite goes
 Since first he died. Such is the coin he pays
 In recompense, who aims too high down there.”
 And I again : “ If that soul which awaits,
 Ere he repent, the selvedge of his life,
 Tarry down there, and do not here ascend,
 If unassisted by friends’ fervent prayers,
 Till time have passed, long as the years he lived,
 By what largess is he already here ? ”
 “ While living yet, “ he said, ” in high estate,
 He in Siena’s public square took up
 His post, and there of his free will, all shame
 Dismissed, to liberate a friend from fine
 He smarted for in Carlo’s jail, he dared
 A deed that made him shiver through his veins :
 I’ll say no more ; what’s said, I know is dark :
 But short the time ere thine own neighbours shall
 So deal, that thou wilt well interpret this :
 That deed from you confines deliver’d him.

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CANTO XII.

The First Circle—Pride—Examples of the Penalty of Pride.

The Angel of Humility—Ascent to the Second Circle.

A BREAST, as oxen go, together yoked,
 With that sore laden soul I made my way,
 While my sweet tutor so permitted it.
 But when he said, "Leave him, and now pass on," 4
 For here 'tis well with studding sail and oar,
 For each, as best he can, to urge his boat,"
 Erect, as should be for a march, once more 7
 I raised my body up, although within
 My thoughts remained depressed, and humbly set.
 I had moved on, and followed cheerily 10
 My master's footsteps; and the two of us
 Already showed how light we were of foot,
 When he said to me: "Turn thine eyes below; 13
 Good will it be as solace on the way,
 To note the bed, which gives thy feet support."
 As, that remembrance of them may endure, 16
 On level tombstones 'bove the buried dead
 The form is traced of what they were in life,
 (Whence there to tenderest tears we oft are drawn 19
 In the compunction of remembered worth,
 Which to a pitying heart applies the spur,
 So saw I there the full breadth of the road 22
 From the hillside adorned with outlined forms,
 Though in their art of finer portraiture.
 I saw on one side him, who, of all things 25
 E'er made, the noblest creature was, from height
 Of heaven hurled down mid flash of lightning fires;
 I saw Briareus, piercèd with the bolt 28
 Celestial, lie right opposite to him,
 Ponderous on earth, stiff in the chill of death.

- I saw Thymbroëus, Mars and Pallas saw 31
 In armour still around their father stand,
 Contemplating the Giants' scattered limbs.
- I saw Nimrod at foot of his huge pile 34
 In consternation gazing on the tribes,
 Whose pride on plain of Shinar wrought with his.
- O Niobe ! with eyes how tearful I 37
 Beheld thy woes upon the pathway traced,
 Amidst thy children in their seven-fold groups.
- O Saul ! how plainly, lying on thy sword, 40
 Didst thou appear in death on Gilboa's hill,
 Which felt thereafter neither rain nor dew.
- O fond Arachne ! thee too I beheld, 43
 Half spider now, in sorrow mid the rags
 Of broidery thou in evil hour hast wrought.
- O Rehoboam ! now no threatening mien 46
 Thy portrait shows, but all aghast, a car
 Bears thee away ere any yet pursue.
- Showed the hard pavement furthermore how dear 49
 The price Alcmeon made his mother pay
 In forfeit for her ill starr'd ornament.
- It showed too how upon Sennacherib 52
 His sons within the temple threw themselves,
 And how they left him there alone with death.
- It showed the rout and cruel butchery 55
 By Tomyris wrought, as she to Cyrus said :
 " Blood was thy thirst, with blood I glut thee now."
- It showed again th' Assyrians in their rout, 58
 And after Holofernes had been slain,
 Showed too what of the massacre remained.
- I saw in ashes Troy, a den of caves : 61
 O Ilion, in case how vile and low
 The sculpture show'd thee, as 'twas there pourtrayed.
- What master of the pencil or of style 64
 The traits and shadows could retrace, which there .
 Might fix the eye of subt'lest genius ?
- The dead were dead, the living seemed alive. 67

Who saw the deeds, no better saw than I
 In all I trod on, as I passed bowed low.
 So vaunt your pride, and foot it with high looks, 70
 Ye sons of Eve, nor lower at all your heads
 To see the evil of the path ye tread.
 More of the mount already we had turned, 73
 And of the sun's course still more had been spent,
 Than could a mind preoccupied have thought,
 When he who went alway with watchful heed 76
 In front of me, began : "Lift up thy head ;
 No time is there to travel thus engrossed.
 An Angel yonder see, who forward hastes 79
 Coming towards us : see, e'en now returns
 The sixth handmaid from service of the day.
 With reverence due prepare thine acts and looks, 82
 So may it please him well to speed us up ;
 Think that to-day will never dawn again."
 Well used was I to admonition such 85
 Against the loss of time, so that to me
 Herein no riddle could it be he spake.
 Toward us the beauteous being nearer drew, 88
 Vested in white, and such the face he bore,
 As may be seen in glint of morning star.
 His arms he opened wide, and opened then 91
 His wings, and said ; " Come, for the stair is nigh,
 And easy henceforth the ascent becomes.
 Unto this message very few respond. 94
 O race of men, born for a flight aloft,
 Why falter thus before a passing breeze ?"
 He led us where the rock was hewn away ; 97
 There with his wing he touched me on the brow,
 And pledged to me a journey thence secure.
 As on the right, when one ascends the hill, 100
 Where sits the Church which dominates the town,
 Order'd so well, 'bove Rubaconte's bridge,
 The arduous steep of the ascent is broke 103
 By sets of stairs, which were first made in days

When gauge and ledger happily were safe,
 E'en so the slope is easier made that falls 106
 Abruptly from the circle next above ;
 Though the high cliff grazes on either side.
 As thitherward we turned our steps, we heard 109
 Beati pauperes spiritu sung
 By voices such as story could not tell.
 And oh ! how different are the defiles here, 112
 From those in hell ; here amidst song we find
 Our entrance, but down there mid savage howls.
 The sacred stairs we had begun to mount, 115
 And lighter much I seemed myself to be,
 E'en than before, along the level plain ;
 When I : " My Master say, what heavy thing 118
 Have I been lightened of, for I perceive,
 As 'twere, no weariness in walking now."
 He answered : " When the *Ps* which still remain 121
 Upon thy brow, though well nigh faded off,
 Shall be, as one is, totally erased,
 Thy feet by such good will shall be constrained, 124
 That not alone will they feel no fatigue,
 But 'twill delight them to be upward urged."
 Then was my act like theirs, who pass along 127
 With something on the head they know not of,
 Unless, by others' signs, suspicion 's roused ;
 Whereon the hand helps to give certainty, 130
 Feeling and finding, and that service lends,
 Which all unable is the eye to give ;
 So with the fingers of my right hand spread, 133
 I found but six the letters he had carved
 Above my temples, who the keys did bear :
 And as he noted this, my Leader smiled. 136

CANTO XIII.

*The Second Circle—Envy—Examples of Charity—
Sapia da Siena.*

THE summit of the stairway we had reached,
 Where for a second time the mount is cut,
 Ascent of which frees every one from ill. 4
 There too a circling ledge surrounds the hill,
 Enclosing it all round just like the first,
 Save that its arc more quickly curveth in,
 No outlined form, nor graven, there appears, 7
 And so the bank and the bare road are seen
 Alike in livid hue of native rock.
 "If here we wait to ask of anyone" 10
 Argued the Poet then, "I fear perchance
 Our choice of path will cause too long delay."
 Then on the sun he fixed a steady eye, 13
 Made his right foot the centre whence to move,
 And wheeled the left side of himself full round.
 "Sweet Light, with confidence in whom I now 16
 Enter an untried road, guide us," he said,
 "As guided here within one needs to be :
 The world thou warmest, and its light thou art ; 19
 If other reason urge not other course,
 Thy beams at all times ought to be our guide."
 Far as we reckon here a mile to be, 22
 Yonder so far had we our way pursued
 In little time by force of vigorous will ;
 And flying now toward us, there were heard, 25
 Not seen however, spirits who proclaimed
 A courteous summons to Love's banquet hall.
 The first voice, which upon the wing passed by, 28
 In clearest tones cried : "*Vinum non habent,*"
 And onward went behind repeating this.

And ere we ceased wholly its distant tones 31
 To catch, a second voice, "Orestes I,"
 With shout went by, and it too tarried not.
 "What voices Father," I exclaimed, "are these?" 34
 And, as I asked, lo! yet a third that said,
 "Love him from whom thou hast received a wrong."
 "This circle scourges," so the Master said, 37
 "The sin of Envy, for which reason here
 The lashes of the whip are drawn from Love.
 The curb needs must be of contrariant tone, 40
 And this, if I judge right, I trow thou'lt hear,
 Ere to the pass of pardon thou attain;
 But through the air keep now thine eye well fixed, 43
 And people thou wilt see before us set,
 Each in his place seated along the cliff."
 Then with eyes opened wider than before, 46
 Forward I looked, and shadows I discerned,
 Mantled in hue not other than the rock.
 And when a little farther we'd advanced, 49
 I heard "*Ora pro nobis Maria,*
 And Michael too, Peter and all the Saints."
 Believe I do not, that on earth there walks 52
 A man so hard, who would not have been wrung
 With deep compassion by what next I saw :
 For when I had to them so near approached, 55
 That all their gestures came to me distinct,
 Freely mine eyes milked out my grief in tears.
 In coarse sackcloth they seemed to me arrayed ; 58
 Each on his shoulder held another up,
 While 'gainst the cliff all found a full support.
 E'en so blind men, in destitution left, 61
 Stand, where the Pard'ner comes, to ask for alms,
 And one upon another leans his head,
 That pity sooner may in others rise, 64
 Not by mere sound of the imploring words,
 But by the sight, which pleads as earnestly :
 And as the sun avails nought to the blind, 67

- So to the shades, of whom but now I spake,
 The light of heaven wills not to give itself.
- For thread of iron pierceth the lids of all, 70
 With stitches such as with the wild spar-hawk
 Are made, because she will not be at rest.
- An outrage seemed it, as I passed along, 73
 To see live people, who could not see me :
 Wherefore I turned to my sage counsellor.
- Well did he know what was the dumb man's wish ; 76
 And therefore waited no demand from me ;
 But said : " Speak, and speak briefly to the point."
- Virgil near me was walking on that side 79
 Of the curved ledge, from which a man might fall,
 Because it is not compassed by a fence :
- On th' other side of me the suppliant shades 82
 Were ranged, who through the horrid sutures poured
 A stream of tears, that trickling bathed their cheeks.
- To them I turned : " Good people, now secure," 85
 'Gan I, " one day to see the light above,
 Desire whereof is now your only care,
- May grace so speedily disperse all scum 88
 From off your consciences, that clear through them
 The stream of memory with you may flow,
- Tell me, and it a welcome boon will be, 91
 If soul there be 'mong you of Latin stock ;
 Well it may be for such, if so I learn."
- " O Brother mine, each here is citizen 94
 Of one true City ; you would ask, did one
 Of us, as pilgrim live in Italy."
- I seemed to catch this answer, as it came 97
 A little further off than where I stood ;
 So moved I thither to be better heard.
- Among the rest one shade I saw, whose looks 100
 Expectant seemed, and should one ask, " How so ?"
 It held the chin upraised, as blind folk do,
- " Spirit," I said, " who to ascend dost here 103
 Thyself subdue, if thine the answer were,

- Acquaint me with thy birthplace or thy name.”
 “ A Sienese I was,” it said, “ and with 106
 The rest here cleanse life’s guilty stains away
 With tears to Him to grant to us Himself.
 Wise I was not, although Sophia named ; 109
 And when misfortune to a neighbour came,
 More I rejoiced than in mine own welfare ;
 And that thou may not think I play thee false, 112
 Hear, were I not the fool I say I was.
 Myself now on the downgrade of life’s arc,
 My countrymen not far from Collè were 115
 In combat with their foe, and I prayed God
 To do the thing, which He already willed.
 Routed they were, and driven in their flight 118
 To bitter straits, and seeing them pursued,
 A joy I felt ’bove aught that I had known :
 So that with daring face I upward looked, 121
 And cried : O God, I fear thee now no more,
 As doth the blackbird on a chance fine day.
 Peace with my God in the last hour of life 124
 I sought, but yet the debt I owed e’en now
 By such repentance had not been cancelled,
 If with compassion in his holy prayers 127
 Pier Pettignano had not mentioned me,
 And of his charity had pitied me.
 But who art thou, that com’st inquiring thus 130
 Of our estate, and, with thine eyes unclosed,
 As I believe, and breathing dost converse ?”
 “ Mine eyes will yet be taken from me here,” 133
 I said, “ but for short while ; for small the wrong
 They’ve done through being enviously turned.
 Much greater is the fear, in which my soul 136
 Hangs in suspense, of torment further down,
 The load of which e’en now weighs heavily ?”
 And she to me : “ Who then hath led thee up 139
 ’Mongst us, if to return below thou think ?”
 And I : “ He who is with me, and speaks not :

- I am alive, and so make thy request,
Spirit elect, if yonder 'tis thy will
I move my mortal feet in thy behalf." 142
- "Oh! this is thing so strange to hear," she said,
"That great sign is it of God's love for thee ;
Therefore assist me sometimes with thy prayers.
And this I ask by what thou most wouldst have ; 158
If e'er thou tread the soil of Tuscany,
Restore my good repute among my kin.
Them thou wilt find among those silly folk 161
Who trust in Talamon, and there will waste
More hopes than they on the Diana spent ;
But there the Admirals will lose the most." 164

CANTO XIV.

*Second Round—Envy—Guido del Duca and Rinier
da Calboli—
The Romagna in MCCC. Examples of Envious in
Penance.*

- “WHO may this be that circleth round our hill,
Or ever death hath bidden him take flight;
Who opes his eyes at will, and closeth them?”
- “I know him not, but know he’s not alone: 4
Ask him thyself, who nearer art to him,
And greet him kindly, that he speak to thee.”
- Two spirits thus, one o’er the other bent, 7
Of me were speaking there upon my right;
And to address me threw their faces back:
- Said one of them: “O Soul, that still enclosed 10
In mortal body movest heavenward on,
Of charity console us, and declare
- Who and from whence thou art; for thou mak’st us 13
As much to wonder at thy favoured state,
As must a thing that ne’er occurred before.”
- And I: “Through midst of Tuscany there winds 16
A streamlet that in Falterona springs;
A hundred miles suffice not for its course.
- From o’er its banks do I this body bring. 19
To tell you who I am would useless be;
My name as yet makes no great noise abroad.”
- “If now thy meaning well I penetrate 22
With my intelligence,” he answered then,
Who spake the first, “the Arno thou must mean.”
- To him the other said: “But why did he 25
The river’s name thus hide away from us,
As one might do, were’t something horrible?”
- The shade to whom this question was addressed, 28
Repaid the answer due; “I know not; but
’Tis right such valley’s name should be forgot:

- For from its earliest source, (where swells so big 31
 The Alp-like range from which Peloro broke,
 That in few places is its bulk surpassed)
 Until it falls, to render back the loss 34
 Of what the sky dries up from out the sea,
 Whence rivers draw what flows along in them,
 Virtue, as if a foe, by every one 37
 Is like a snake chased off, through some ill chance
 Of place, or evil habit goading them.
 Wherefore the dwellers in the wretched vale 40
 Their nature have so utterly transformed,
 That Circe it might seem had pastured them.
 'Mong filthy swine for acorns better fit, 43
 Than other meat prepared for human use,
 One sees it first direct its starveling course.
 Next wretched curs it finds, as down it flows, 46
 Snarling more fiercely than becomes their strength,
 From whom it turns its muzzle in disdain.
 Descending still, the more it widens out, 49
 The curséd and ill fated ditch the more
 Finds that the whilom dogs are turned to wolves.
 Then as it falls through many a deep ravine, 52
 Foxes it finds with cunning so possessed,
 No fear have they of wit to match their own.
 Nor, though another hears, will I forbear 55
 To speak ; and good for that man will it be
 To mind what a true spirit now unfolds.
 I see thy grandson in his turn become 58
 The hunter of those wolves upon the bank
 Of the fierce river, terrifying all.
 Their flesh he sells, while it is still alive ; 61
 Then butchers them like ancient beeves ; many
 He robs of life, and of renown himself.
 Blood stained he issues from the dismal grove ; 64
 And leaves it such, that hence a thousand years
 Will not replant it in its pristine form."
 As at the news of some distressful loss. 67

- The face of him who hears is greatly moved,
 Come whence it may, the danger that assails,
 So did I see the other soul, who stood 70
 Turned round to hear, perturbed and sore distressed,
 After he had this utterance gathered in.
- The words of one, the other's countenance 73
 Made me desire to learn the name of each,
 And such request entreatingly I urged.
- Whereon the spirit, who addressed me first, 76
 Began : "Thou wouldest that I condescend
 To do for thee, what thou wilt not for me ;
 But since God willeth that in thee His grace. 79
 Should shine so full, no niggard will I be.
 Know then that Guido del Duca am I.
 So hot with envy was my blood inflamed, 82
 That did I see a man in mirthful mood,
 Thou would'st have seen me livid in my spite.
 From mine own sowing reap I here this straw. 85
 O race of men, why set the heart on aught
 That disallows the right of fellowship ?
 This is Rinier, the pride and honour he 88
 Of the da Calboli, a house, where none
 Has since inherited his goodly worth.
 And not his race alone hath been despoil'd, 91
 'Tween Po and mountains, Reno and the shore,
 Of means required for truth and chivalry ;
 For all within these confines is filled full 94
 Of poisonous roots, so that long time 'twill be,
 Ere cultivation can extirpate them.
- Good Lizio where? Harry Manardi where? 97
 Pier Traversaro and Carpigna's Guy ?
 Ye Romagnoles, a bastard brood become.
- When in Bologna shall a Fabbro rise, 100
 Or in Faenza Bernard di Fosco
 A noble scion of a modest stock ?
 Marvel not, Tuscan, at the tears I shed, 103
 When Guy of Prata I recall to mind,

- And Ugolin d'Azzo, who lived with us ;
 Frederick Tignoso and his company, 106
 The Traversari, th' Anastagi too,
 The races both left now without an heir ;
 The ladies and the knights, the toil and ease, 109
 Which stirr'd us all to love and courtesy
 There, where men's hearts are now so wicked grown.
 O Brettinoro, why not disappear, 112
 Since from thy House thy retinue hath fled,
 And many with it to escape from guilt ?
 Bagnacaval ! well done ! still without heir ; 115
 But ill doth Castrocaro, Conio worse,
 That such a breed of Counts still strive to keep.
 A happier fortune the Pagani waits, 118
 When once their demon goes, but not for that
 Can e'er the record of their house be pure.
 O Ugolin de'Fantolin, thy name 121
 Is safe, for thee no scion doth await,
 Who may besmirch the lustre of thy line.
 But Tuscan hence, away ; for my desire 124
 Is now much more to weep than to converse :
 This our discourse my spirit hath so wrung."
 Well did we understand that those kind souls 127
 Perceived our going, and their silence thus
 Gave us assurance in the path we took.
 Then, as now left alone, we onward went, 130
 Like thunder, when it cleaves the air, so seemed
 A voice, that come towards us and proclaimed :
 " *Slay me will any one that findeth me ;*" 133
 It passed, re-echoing in a distant roll,
 As when the storm-cloud suddenly is rent.
 Then as a respite to the ear ensued, 136
 Lo ! yet another with a crash as loud,
 Like thunder following fast, roll upon roll :
 " *I am Aglauros who was turned to stone.*" 139
 To draw me nearer to the Poet then
 Backward, not forward, did I take a step.

Once more on every side the air was still, 142
And unto me he said : “ The sharp curb that,
Which ought to keep a man within his bounds.
But to the bait you rise, so that the hook 145
Of the old enemy draws you to him,
And little then avails or curb or call.
The heavens are telling, and round you revolve, 148
Opening th’ eternal beauties to your view ;
While upon earth alone your eye is fixed ;
Wherefore He smites you, Who discerneth all.” 151

CANTO XV.

*Second Round—Envy—The Angel of Brotherly Love—
Ascent to Third Round—Wrath—Visions of Meekness—
Penance of the Wrathful.*

AS much as 'tween the third hour's close and dawn
 Of opening day appeareth of the sphere,
 Which like a child is ever on the move,
 So much towards eventide already seemed 4
 Remaining to the sun of his full course :
 There 'twas the vesper hour, and midnight here.
 And the rays smote us midway on the nose, 7
 For we had so encompassèd the hill,
 That now due westward we were moving on ;
 When on my brow I felt oppression of 10
 A brightness greater than at first, and I
 Was lost in stupor, at the unknown cause.
 Whereon I raised my hands above my brow, 13
 Providing for myself the sunshade thus
 That turns the edge of an excessive glare.
 As when from water, or a mirror's face 16
 The ray rebounds contrary to its fall,
 Ascending upward in the self same mode
 In which it falls, divergent just so far 19
 From perpendicular, through equal space,
 As knowledge and experience declare,
 So did I think that I was smitten there 22
 By a reflected light in front of me :
 Wherefore my sight was quick to make escape.
 "Dear Father, what is this, that I cannot 25
 To any purpose screen my eyes from it,"

I said, "and it toward us seems to move?"
 "No marvel if the Family of Heaven 28
 With glory still confound thee," answered he :
 "He comes an envoy, bidding us go up.
 And soon thou'lt find the sight of visions such 31
 Will not be grievous to thee, but delight
 As sweet, as Nature gave thee power to feel."
 Soon as the blessed Angel we had reached, 34
 With gladsome voice he said : "Here enter in
 Upon a stair than others much less steep."
 Mounting were we, already on our way, 37
 When from behind was chanted "*Beati*
Misericordes" and "*To Conqueror Joy!*"
 My master and myself, we two alone, 40
 Were going up ; and as I went, I thought
 To gain advantage from converse with him ;
 And straight to him I turned, inquiring thus : 43
 "What might that spirit from Romagna mean,
 Who spake of interdict and partnership?"
 "Then he to me : Of his own greatest sin 46
 He knows the penalty ; and no wonder then,
 If he reprove, that others weep the less.
 Because your wishes all converge on things 49
 Of which by fellowship a part is lost,
 Envy applies her bellows to your sighs.
 But if the love of the supernal sphere 52
 Turned your affection unto things above,
 Within your breast that fear would have no place ;
 For in so far as there they call aught "ours," 55
 So much the more of good doth each possess,
 And in that cloister love glows all the more."
 "For full contentment I still hungrier am, 58
 Than if at first I silent had remained,
 And greater doubt collects within my mind
 How it can be that good distributed 61
 Makes partners richer as they number more,
 Than if by fewer it had been possessed?"

And he to me : " Because again thy mind
 Is fixed upon the things of earth alone, 64
 From light itself thou dost extract darkness.
 That Good, ineffable and infinite, 67
 Which is above, so hastes to welcome love,
 As to a shining substance comes the ray.
 A warmth it gives, measured by what it finds, 70
 So that the wider Charity expands,
 The mightier grows th' Eternal Potency.
 And as the more there are agreed above, 73
 More is there to love well, and more 'tis loved,
 And mirrorwise each other they reflect.
 And if my reasons have not satisfied 76
 Thy hunger, Beatrice thou'lt see, who will
 All this remove, and all thy craving else.
 Only strive on, that soon may disappear 79
 All the five wounds, as have already two,
 Which in the smart they cause are closèd up.
 And as I would have said, " Content I am," 82
 I saw that I had reached the next cornice,
 So that my eager eyes silence constrained.
 There did it seem to me that suddenly 85
 I was in ecstasy of vision caught,
 And in a temple many persons saw ;
 And on the threshold one, a Lady, stood 88
 In the sweet form of Mother : " O my Son,"
 Shè said, " Wherefore hast thou thus dealt with us ?
 Thy father, see, and I in sorrow went 91
 In search of thee." And as she ceased to speak,
 All that at first appeared, had disappeared.
 Whereon was seen another, down whose cheeks 94
 Those waters ran in streams, that grief distils,
 When by resentment 'gainst another roused ;
 Said she : " If of this city thou be lord, 97
 The name of which caused contest 'mong the gods,
 And whence all science radiates abroad,
 Vengeance from thee I ask upon those arms 100

That dared, Pisistratus, embrace our girl."
 Kindly and gently seemed to me the Chief
 To answer her with looks of calm restraint : 103
 "What shall we do with him, who seeks our hurt,
 If he who loves us, is by us condemned?"
 Next saw I crowds inflamed with fire of rage, 106
 Stoning with stones a youth amid loud cries
 Among themselves: "Away with him, away."
 And him I saw kneel down upon the earth 109
 Beneath the weight of death that lay on him ;
 But opening still his eyes, as gates to heaven,
 In all this strife he prayed the Lord on high, 112
 That He would pardon these his enemies,
 With aspect such as pity aye unlocks.
 When my mind turned again to outside things, 115
 Which, if external to it, still are true,
 I knew that my illusions were not false.
 Said then my Guide, who well could see that I 118
 Bore me like one just out of sleep aroused,
 "What ails thee, that thou canst not hold thee up ?
 Nay, thou hast gone for more than half a league 121
 With eyes half closed, and tottering legs cross-wise,
 Like one whom wine or sleep hath overcome?"
 "Sweet father mine, but lend thine ear to me, 124
 And I will tell," said I, "what 'twas I thought
 I saw, when under me my legs gave way."
 And he : "If thou a hundred masks did wear 127
 Upon thy face, from me would not be hid
 Thy inmost thoughts however small they were.
 The vision came, that thou should'st not refuse 130
 Thy heart to open to the streams of peace,
 Which from th' Eternal Fount are shed abroad.
 I did not ask what ails thee, as might he, 133
 Who looks but with the eye that sees no more,
 When without soul the body lifeless lies.
 I asked but to give vigour to thy feet : 136
 The idle dreamer thus 'tis well to rouse

To use his waking hours, when they return.”
Onward we went in twilight with outlook 139
Cast forward far as eye could penetrate,
In face of sunbeams, brilliant still, if late :
And lo ! by slow degrees a smoke rolls in, 142
Driving towards us, and obscure as night,
Nor place of refuge from it might we find.
It took from us our eyes and the pure air. 145

CANTO XVI.

*The Third Round—Wrath—Marco Lombardo—Free Will—
The Corruption of the World—Corrada da Palazzo—
Gherardo da Camino—Guido da Castello—Gaia.*

A FOG of hell, and of a night bereft
 Of every planet 'neath a starveling sky,
 And thick as could be, darkened o'er with cloud,
 Spread not upon my face a veil so dense, 4
 As did the smoke which there enveloped us ;
 Nor stung sensation with such pungency ;
 For open in it could no eye abide ; 7
 Whereon mine escort, ever wise and true,
 Proffered his shoulder, drawing to my side.
 And as a blind man goes behind his guide, 10
 Thus not to lose his way, nor run against
 Aught that may hurt, or possibly may kill,
 So through the foul and bitter air I passed, 13
 Hearing my Leader's oft repeated charge,
 "Be careful that thou lose not touch of me."
 Voices the while I heard, and each appeared 16
 For mercy and for peace to supplicate
 The Lamb of God Who taketh sins away.
 Ever with *Agnus Dei* they began ; 19
 The words with all were one, the measure one,
 So that among them all seemed harmony.
 "Master," I said, "Spirits are these I hear ?" 22
 And he to me : "The truth thou dost divine,
 And on they go, loosening the knot of wrath."
 "Now who art thou that cleavest thus our smoke, 25
 And in converse dost speak of us, as if
 By Calends thou didst still divide the time ?"
 These words were apoken by one voice alone ; 28

- Whereon the Master said to me : " Reply,
And ask if this way lie the upper road."
- And I : " O being, that art cleansing thee, 31
All comely to thy Maker to return,
If me thou follow, a strange thing thou'lt hear."
" Thee will I follow far as is allowed," 34
He said ; " and if the smoke permit us not
To see, the ear will keep us well in touch."
Then I began : " Swathed in those bands, which death 37
Dissolves, my upward way I here pursue,
And hither came through all th' anguish of hell ;
And if in grace God so enfoldeth me, 40
That 'tis His Will I should His courts behold,
By means unknown to us of later day,
Hide not from me, who before death thou wast ; 43
This say, and say if this road to the pass
Lead well, and thy words shall our escort be."
" Lombard I was, and Marco was my name, 46
The world I knew, and that high standard loved,
For which each one leaves now his bow unstrung.
For the ascent thou goest quite direct." 49
His answer such, but added : " Thee I pray
To pray for me when thou shalt reach the height."
And I to him : " I pledge me by my faith 52
To do thy will ; but with an inner doubt
I burst, if of it I be unrelieved ;
First 'twas a single doubt, but doubled now 55
By thy opinion, which, with the other joined
Whereto I couple it, leaves me assured.
The world is thus indeed wholly bereft 58
Of every virtue, as thou dost propound,
Is big with malice, and by it o'erspread.
The cause of this I pray thee to point out, 61
That I may see it, and to others show ;
One puts it in heaven, and one on earth."
A deep drawn sigh, which grief constrained to " Ah," 64
At first he fetched ; then, " Brother," he began,

"The world is blind, and plainly thence thou com'st :
 Ye, who are living, every cause refer, 67
 Up to the stars alone, as if all things
 They with themselves moved of necessity.
 But were it thus, in you would be destroyed 70
 Free will, nor any justice would there be
 In having joy for good, or woe for sin.
 The heav'ns your first movements initiate, 73
 I say not all, but granted that I do,
 For good and evil there was given light,
 And free will too, which if it hold out in 76
 The toil of its first struggles with the stars,
 Conquers them all at last, when nurtured well.
 To nobler force and better nature ye 79
 Are subject, though freemen ; 'tis this that forms
 In you a mind beyond the stars' control.
 If then the present world do go astray, 82
 The cause is in yourselves ; there search it out.
 This will I now truly explore with you.
 Forth from the hand of Him, Who fondles it, 85
 Ere it exist, like to a little child,
 That childishly now laughs, and cries anon,
 Issues the simple soul, that nothing knows 88
 Save that as moved by a glad Maker's will,
 It freely turns to what best pleases it.
 The flavour of some trivial good at first 91
 It tastes, and cheated, this pursues,
 If neither guide nor curb divert its love.
 Hence it behaved, as bridles, to set laws ; 94
 Behaved to have a king, who at the least
 The towers of Truth's own City should discern.
 The laws are there, but who takes them in hand ? 97
 None ; for the Shepherd who precedes the flock,
 Albeit he chew the cud, divides no hoof.
 And so the people, who behold their guide 100
 Strike only at the good for which he lusts,
 Feed on that too, and ask for nothing else.

- Well canst thou see that ill direction is 103
 The cause that hath so evil made the world,
 And not a nature hopelessly corrupt.
- Time was when Rome, that led the world to good, 106
 Shone with two suns, which either road to all
 Made plain, the way of God, and of the world.
- One hath the other quenched, and now the sword 109
 Is with the crozier joined, the two needs must
 Move on together, in ill suited yoke,
 Because combined, respective fear is lost. 112
 If thou believe not, note the corn in ear,
 For every plant is by its seed made known.
- Where Po and Adige irrigate the plain, 115
 Valour and courtesy there always dwelt,
 Or ever Frederick found himself in strife.
- Now in security may there pass on, 118
 Who'er for very shame should fain avoid
 Good men's society or neighbourhood.
- Three old men are there still, in whom old days 121
 Reprove the new, to whom it seems o'er long,
 Ere in the better life God harvests them :
- Corrado da Palazzo, good Gerard ; 124
 And Guida da Castel, though better named
 The simple Lombard, in the Frenchmen's style.
- Confess henceforth that now the Church of Rome, 127
 Confounding in herself two regimens,
 Falls in the mire, and fouls her charge and self."
- "O Marco mine," I said "thou reasonest well ; 130
 And now I see why from inheritance
 The sons of Levi were of old debarred :
- But who may Gerard be, who, as thou sayst, 133
 Is left as sample of a vanished race,
 In stern reproof of this most barbarous age ?"
- "Thy words deceive, or put me to the proof," 136
 He answered me, "for though of Tuscan speech,
 'Twould seem the good Gerard thou dost not know :
- No other surname do I know him by, 139

Unless his daughter Gaia furnish it.

Now God be with you ; further I go not,
For see the brightness gleaming through the smoke
Already whitens ; needs must I depart—

142

The Angel stands there—ere he me perceive.”
So turned he back, and would not hear me more.

145

CANTO XVII.

*The Third Round—Anger—Exit from the Smoke—
Penance of the Wrathful—Angel of Peace—Ascent of the Fourth
Round—Night—Theory of Love—Moral System of
the Divisions in Purgatory.*

READER, recall if ever in the Alps
 A mist have caught thee, when thou could'st not see
 In other way than like a mole through film ;
 How, as the vapours thick, with moisture charged,
 Begin their first dispersion, the sun's orb 4
 Feebly through them a struggling entrance makes,
 And thy imagination easily
 Will come to see how at the first the sun 7
 Now sinking to his rest, I saw again.
 Thus at pace measured by the trusty steps
 Of my own Master, from such cloud I passed 10
 To beams already on the low shores dead.
 O Phantasy, that dost sometimes steal us
 So far outside ourselves, one notes them not, 13
 Although a thousand trumpets bray around,
 Who stirs thee, when the senses nought present ?
 A light it is in heaven that stirs thee, there 16
 Self formed, or by a Will that sends it down.
 Of her ferocity, who changed her form
 Into the bird, that most delights in song, 19
 Upon my fancy the outline appeared :
 And here my mind so straitly was shut up
 Within itself, that from without there came 22
 Nothing that could by it be entertained.
 On my exalted fancy next there poured
 A figure crucified, scornful and fierce 25
 In countenance, and dying in such form.
 Around him great Ahasuerus stood, 28

Esther his wife, and Mordecai the just,
 Of pure integrity in word and deed. 31
 And as this vision of itself dispersed,
 Broken in fashion of a bubble, when
 The water fails, beneath which it was formed,
 Uprose a maiden then into my view, 34
 That weeping bitterly exclaimed: "O Queen,
 In wrath why would'st thou into nothing pass?
 Thyself thou'st slain, Livinia not to lose; 37
 Now me thou'st lost, and I am she, who mourn,
 Mother, for thine, ere yet another's fall."
 As when beneath a sudden ray of light, 40
 That early strikes on closèd eyes, sleep breaks,
 And broken, quivers ere it wholly dies,
 So sank the vision of my fancy down, 43
 Soon as upon my face there smote a light,
 Brighter than any our experience knows.
 I turned me round to see where I might be; 46
 When spake a voice that said: "Th' ascent is here,"
 Which from all object else withdrew my thought,
 And made my will so eager in desire 49
 To see who it could be that spake but now,
 It would not rest till it confronted him.
 But as our sight is by the sun o'erwhelmed, 52
 That in excess of splendour hides its form,
 E'en so did here my faculties give way.
 "A spirit this, divine; who shows to us 55
 The upward path, ere we have made request,
 And who in his own light conceals himself;
 He deals with us, as doth a man with self: 58
 For he who sees a need, and waits request,
 Prepares himself malignly to refuse.
 With such a call let now our feet accord, 61
 And forward push th' ascent, ere it be dark,
 For then we cannot, until day returns."
 So said my Guide, and he and I forthwith 64
 Turned both of us our steps to a stairway;

And soon as on the first step I arrived,
 Near me I felt the waving of a wing, 67
 That fanned my face, and "*Beati*" I heard
 "*Pacifici*," from sinful anger free."
 Already over us so high had shot 70
 The latest rays, whereon ensues the night,
 That stars were shining on all sides of us.
 "Ye powers of mine, why melt ye thus away?" 73
 Within myself I said, as I perceived
 Ability to use my legs was gone.
 We had arrived where farther mounted not 76
 The stair, and at a standstill found ourselves,
 E'en as a ship, that's hauled up on the beach.
 Awhile I listened closely, might I hear 79
 Perchance on the new circle any sound.
 Then to the Master I turned round, and said :
 "Sweet Father, tell me what offence it is, 82
 That in this circle, where we are, is purged :
 If halt our feet, let not thy converse halt."
 And he to me : "The Love of good remiss 85
 In duty practical, is strengthened here ;
 Here works with double stroke the sluggish oar.
 But that more clearly still thou understand, 88
 Direct to me thy thoughts, and thou wilt find
 Some profitable fruit in our delay.
 Neither Creator, nor created thing, 91
 My son," 'gan he, "was ever without love,
 Instinctive or deliberate, as you know.
 Th' instinctive ever is from error free ; 94
 The other by an evil aim can err,
 Or by its lack, or its excess of force.
 While it is led aright to the first Good, 97
 And in the second moderates itself,
 It cannot be the cause of ill delight.
 But when to ill it swerves, or with desire, 100
 Greater or less than right, runs after good,
 Against its Maker works the thing that's made.

- Hence thou canst comprehend, needs must it be, 103
 Love is in you the seed of all virtue,
 And of all acts that merit punishment.
- Now in that Love can never turn its face 106
 From welfare of the thing wherein it dwells,
 From hatred of themselves all things are safe.
- And since from the First Cause none thinks himself 109
 Cut off, or standing by himself alone,
 All feeling alien is from hate of It.
- Remains then this, if my division's true, 112
 The ill man loves his neighbour must concern ;
 And in three modes this love springs in your clay.
- There is, who in a neighbour's fall hopes for 115
 His own preeminence, and only longs
 That from his high estate he be brought down.
- There is, who fears grace, honour, power or fame 118
 To lose, if others rise above himself
 And sadden'd thus, desires the contrary.
- There is who by some outrage is so galled, 121
 That for revenge he hungers greedily,
 And such needs must gloat on another's ill.
- Such triform Love is punished down below. 124
 I now would have you know the other Love,
 Which rushes after good disorderly.
- Each hazily a chief good apprehends, 127
 Wherein the soul may rest, and longs for it ;
 And so to reach it each applies himself.
- If but a torpid love draw thee to look 130
 On this, or win its grace, this ledge will then
 After due penitence, inflict its pain.
- Another good there is, which happy makes 133
 No man ; itself not happiness, still less
 The Essence, root and fruit, of every good.
- The love, which gives itself too much to this, 136
 Above us in three circles is bewailed ;
 But why 'tis right it be tripartite thus.
- I say not, that thou search it for thyself." 139

CANTO XVIII.

The Fourth Round—Spiritual Indifference.

*Nature of Love—Love and Free Will—Examples of
Activity and Zeal—*

*Abbot of San Zeno—The Scaligers—Punishment of
Indifference—Dante falls asleep.*

THE lofty Teacher to an end had brought
 His argument, and now attentively
 Looked in my face, were I well satisfied.
 And I, whom yet a new thirst farther urged, 4
 Kept silence outwardly, but inly said :
 “ Perhaps too much inquiry wearies him.”
 But that true Father, who in me perceived 7
 The timid wish that was not yet disclosed,
 Speaking himself. embolden'd me to speak.
 Then I : “ Master, my sight so lively grows 10
 In light from thee, that clearly I discern
 How much thy reasoning doth imply or tell :
 Wherefore dear, gentle Father, I entreat, 13
 Define the love, to which thou dost refer
 Every good work, and what is contrary.”
 “ Direct to me the keenest eyes,” he said, 16
 “ Of thy intelligence, and plain will be
 The error of the blind, that would be guides.
 The soul, which is created prompt to love, 19
 To all that pleaseth moveth readily,
 Soon as by pleasure 'tis to action roused.
 Your apprehension from real substance draws 22
 An image, and developes it within,
 So that it makes the mind toward it turn ;
 And if thus turned, it do incline to it, 25

That inclination's love ; 'tis nature too,
 Which is by pleasure bound anew in you. 28
 Then as the fire doth ever upward rise,
 By its own essence thither born to mount,
 Where in its element 'tis most at home,
 E'en so the captured soul begins to yearn 31
 In motion spiritual, and never rests,
 Until the thing beloved, becomes its joy.
 Now may it well appear to thee how truth 34
 Is hidden from the people, that aver
 That each love in itself is laudable :
 For though perchance in matter love may seem 37
 To be good always, yet not every seal
 Is good, however good the wax may be."
 "Thy words and my attendant wit on them," 40
 My answer thus, "have love revealed to me ;
 But have withal bred in me greater doubt ;
 For if from outside love present itself, 43
 And if the soul move only on this foot,
 Right way or wrong, no merit it deserves."
 And he to me : "What reason here can see, 46
 'Tis mine to say : for more wait Beatrice ;
 For beyond this, the work is work of Faith.
 Every substantial form, that is distinct 49
 From matter, but which with it is combined,
 Specific virtue hath, bound up in it,
 The which except in action is unknown ; 52
 And only in effect doth show itself,
 As by green leaves life in a plant appears.
 Therefore whence comes the apprehension of 55
 Our primal notions, no man knows ; nor whence
 The first attractions to what men desire ;
 Which are in you like instinct in the bees 58
 To make their honey ; and this primal wish
 No merit hath of either praise or blame.
 Now that round this the other may collect, 61
 An innate power you have, advising you,

That ought to guard the threshold of assent.
 This is the principle, wherein is found
 Cause of desert in you, according as
 It sifts and winnows love, or good or ill. 64
 They, whose researches have the bottom plumbed,
 Clearly perceived this innate liberty,
 And in it left the world morality. 67
 Let us then grant that of necessity
 All love arises, that within you burns,
 Restraining power abides within you still. 70
 This noble faculty doth Beatrice
 Mean by Free Will; so give good heed that thou
 Remember this, if of it she should speak." 73
 The moon belated, midnight almost now,
 Left to our view but scanty show of stars,
 Herself become like brazier all aglow; 76
 And counter to the heavens moved in the track
 The sun inflames, what time the Roman sees
 Him 'tween Sardinia set and Corsica; 79
 That high born shade, who more illustrious makes
 Pietola, than Mantua's city e'en,
 Had of my burthen lifted off the load, 82
 While I, who plain and open arguments
 Had well stored up, upon the points I'd raised,
 Stood as a man who drowsily drops off. 85
 But all such drowsiness was borne away
 From me by persons, who in rear of us
 Wheeled on a sudden round, making our way. 88
 And as of old Ismenus and Asopus
 Saw 'long their banks by night a rushing crowd,
 If but the Thebans needed Bacchus' aid,
 Such was the throng, so far as I could see, 94
 Whom a good will and righteous love bestrode,
 As round that circle on the curve they swept.
 Quickly they reached us, for as runners at
 Full speed, that mighty multitude rushed on, 97
 And two in front in saddened tone called out:

- "Mary with haste to the hill country sped!" 100
 And, "Cæsar, bent Iberda to subdue,
 Struck at Marseilles, and pushed on thence for Spain."
 "On, quickly on, that no time may be lost 103
 Through lack of love," cried out the rest behind;
 "For grace grows green again in zeal for good."
 "Good people all, whose fervent spirit now 106
 Redeems perhaps the negligence and sloth
 Displayed in past lukewarmness for good works,
 This man, who lives, and I indeed lie not, 109
 Would fain go up, when shines the sun again;
 Wherefore tell us, if near the passage be."
 These were the words my Leader spake to them: 112
 And of those spirits one did say: "With us
 Come on behind; the opening thou wilt find.
 We are so full of purpose to push on, 115
 That stay we cannot; wherefore pardon us,
 If in our righteousness thou deem us churls.
 San Zeno's Abbot in Verona I, 118
 What time the worthy Barbarossa reigned,
 Of whom Milan still speaks in doleful strain.
 A man there is with one foot in the grave, 121
 Who for that convent soon will groan in tears,
 And sad will be, that he its patron was;
 Because his son in body all deformed, 124
 And worse in mind, dishonoured in his birth,
 He put into the rightful shepherd's place."
 If he said more, or if he ceased to speak, 127
 I know not, so far had he now run on;
 But this I heard, and gladly noted it.
 And he, who in all need my succour was, 130
 Said: "This way turn, see toward us coming two,
 Who mourn their sloth in biting self reproach."
 Behind the rest they cried: "Dead were they all, 133
 For whom the sea had once a highway cleared,
 Ere yet their heirs the banks of Jordan saw."
 And, "They, who would not with Anchises' son 136

The toil of travel to the end endure,
Gave themselves up to an inglorious life.”
When after this, those shades so far from us 139
Were parted, that they could no more be seen,
Within me a new thought its entrance made,
From which yet more were born, diverse from it. 142
From one to other I so wandered on,
That to find comfort I mine eyelids closed,
And into dream I changed by reveries. 145

CANTO XIX.

*Fourth Round—Symbolism of Dante's Dream—
The Angel of Activity—Ascent to Fifth Round.*

A BOUT the hour, when heat of day, o'ercome
 By Earth, or Saturn sometimes, can no more
 Prevail to warm the beams of a chill moon ;
 When in the East the geomancers see, 4
 Ere dawn appears, *Fortuna Major* rise
 On path that but short while remaineth dark,
 To me in dream a stuttering woman came, 7
 With eyes asquint and on distorted feet,
 With maimèd hands and of a sallow hue :
 On her I stared ; and as the sun doth cheer 10
 The shiv'ring limbs benumbed by chills of night,
 So did that look of mine for her unloose
 The tongue, and made her to her full height rise, 13
 E'en in a trice, and her scared countenance
 Assumed the tint that love delights to wear.
 Soon as her power of speech was thus unloosed, 16
 She 'gan to sing so that I scarcely could
 My rapt attention have from her withheld.
 "I am," sang she, "I am the sweet Siren, 19
 Who in mid seas the mariners mislead,
 So full of pleasantness am I to hear.
 Ulysses in his wandering by my song 22
 I turned aside, and whoso with me 'bides,
 Rarely departs, so well I him content."
 Her mouth as yet was hardly closed again, 25
 When prompt appeared a Saintly Dame in haste,
 Close at my side the other to confound.
 "Virgilius, O Virgilius, who is this?" 28
 Indignantly she asked, and he drew near

With eyes fixed only on that honoured form.
 She seized the other, and her breast laid bare, 31
 Tearing her garments, and her belly showed,
 Which woke me with the stench that issued thence.
 I turned mine eyes, and the good Virgil said : 34
 " Thrice at the least I've called, Arise and come ;
 Find we the opening, where thine entrance lies."
 I rose, and filled already with broad day 37
 Were all the circuits of the sacred hill,
 We going with the young sun at our backs.
 As him I followed, I did bear my brow, 40
 As one who carries there a load of thought,
 And makes himself the half arch of a bridge ;
 When heard I : " This way come, the passage here," 43
 Spoken in accents sweet, and so benign,
 As mortals in our confines never hear.
 With open wings, which swan-like seemed to spread, 46
 He, who thus spake, directed us upwards
 'Tween the two walls of rocky masonry,
 He waved his pinions, and he fanned us then, 49
 Affirming *Qui lugent* are blest, for they
 Will in their souls ladies of comfort find.
 " What ails thee that thy looks are fixed on earth ?" 52
 To me my Leader thus began to say,
 As we above the Angel somewhat climbed.
 And I : " A recent vision so haunts me, 55
 And makes me with so much misgiving go,
 That from it I cannot withdraw my thoughts."
 " That old enchantress hast thou seen," he said, 58
 " Who higher up alone makes souls lament ?
 And hast thou seen how man escapes from her ?
 Suffice it so ; strike thy heels firmly down ; 61
 Lift up thine eyes unto the lure, which on
 Its mighty wheels the King Eternal rolls."
 As falcon, which first to its feet directs 64
 Its eye, then at the call looks up again,
 And eager stretches to the enticing bait,

- So did I too, and so far as the rock 67
 Is cleft to make a path for him who mounts,
 Went I right up to where the circle starts.
- When I upon the fifth round was set free, 70
 Persons I saw along it plunged in grief,
 Prostrate on earth, all on their faces laid,
Adhæsit pavimento anima mea 73
 I heard them cry mid sighs so deeply drawn,
 That scarcely was their utterance understood.
- “O ye elect of God, whose sufferings here 76
 Justice and hope do render less severe,
 Direct us now towards the heights above.”
- “If here ye come from our prostration free, 79
 With the desire to find the readiest way,
 Keep your right hands aye to the outer side.”
- Such was the Poet’s prayer, its answer such, 82
 Which reached us somewhat from the front, whereby
 The voice advised me of the one concealed ;
- I to my Lord turned an enquiring look ; 85
 And he with gladsome sign gave his assent
 To what the gesture of my wish implied.
- Now that I could my own desire indulge, 88
 I nearer drew, and o’er that being stood,
 Whose words first made me note him, and I said :
- “Spirit, in whom sorrow doth now mature 91
 That without which is no return to God,
 Suspend awhile for me thy greater care.
- Who wast thou? and with backs inverted thus, 94
 Say, why ye lie, and wouldst thou have me win
 Aught for thee there, whence still alive I’m come?”
- And he: “Why heaven thus turns our hinder parts 97
 Unto itself thou shalt be told, but first
Scias quod ego fui successor Petri.
- Between Chiaveri and Sestri falls 100
 A river beautiful, and in its name
 The title of my house originates.
- Within a month or little more, I learned 103

- How the great cope weights him, who from the mire
 Guards it; lighter than feathers all load else.
- Tardy, alas! my own conversion was; 106
 But when of Rome the Shepherd I became,
 Then I found out the falsehood of our life.
- I saw that there heart never found its rest, 109
 And in that life I could no higher rise;
 So love for this life then in me took fire.
- Up to that time I was a wretched soul, 112
 Estranged from God, the prey of avarice:
 Now, as thou seest, am I punished here.
- What avarice works, is here made manifest 115
 In the purgation of converted souls;
 No pain more bitter hath the mount than this:
- Just as our eye did never raise itself 118
 To heaven on high, fixed on the things of earth,
 So to the earth hath Justice sunk it here.
- As avarice quenched our love for everything 121
 That's good, whence all our labour was in vain,
 So Justice holds us here in tightest bonds,
- Fettered and handcuffed, feet and hands alike; 124
 And long as to the Just Lord it seems good,
 Thus shall we lie stretched out and motionless."
- I had knelt down by him, and wished to speak; 127
 But e'en as I began, and he was 'ware,
 Only by hearing, of my reverence,
- "What cause," said he, "hath made thee thus bend down?" 130
 And I: "By reason of your dignity
 Conscience reproached me sharply that I stood."
- "Straighten thy legs, my Brother; lift thee up;" 133
 He said; "err not; a fellow servant I,
 With thee and with the rest, to one liege Lord.
- If in th' Evangelist those holy words, 136
Neque nubent, thou e'er hast understood,
 Thou well canst see why thus I speak to thee.
- Now go thy way; thy stay is not my wish, 139
 For here thy presence doth disturb the grief,

By which I ripen what thou spakest of.
Yonder I have a niece, Alagia named, 142
Good in herself, provided that our house
By its example turn her not to ill;
And she remains all that is left me there." 145

CANTO XX.

Fifth Round—Avarice and Prodigality—

*Examples of Poverty and Liberality—Hugh Capet and the
Capetians—Examples of Base Avarice—A Soul set free—*

The Mountain quakes.

ILL, fights the will against a better will,
 Wherefore, against my pleasure to please him,
 My sponge, ere filled with water, I withdrew.
 Onward I went ; on went my Leader too 4
 Along the open spaces neath the rock,
 As on the walls one hugs the rampart close ;
 For they, who drop by drop from out their eyes 7
 Pour forth the sin, which the whole world infects,
 On th' outer side approached too near the edge.
 A curse befall thee, O thou old she-wolf, 10
 That ravenest more than all the beasts beside,
 In depth of endless greed insatiable !
 O Heaven, in whose rotation it is thought 13
 That men's conditions here below change too,
 When will He come, before whom she takes flight ?
 Onward we went with tardy steps and short, 16
 Myself attentive to the shades I heard
 Bemoaning and lamenting piteously.
 And by a chance in front of me I caught 19
Dolce Maria, invoked in strain as sad,
 As of a woman in her childbed pangs ;
 And then there followed, " Poor indeed thou wast, 22
 As the rude shelter of the stable shows,
 Where thou did'st lay thy Holy Burden down."
 And next I heard : " O good Fabricius, 25
 Who poverty with virtue didst prefer,

Rather than riches and a vicious life."
 Such pleasure to me did these words convey, 28
 That I drew farther on to ascertain
 Who the soul was, from whom they seemed to come :
 And yet again he spoke of the largess, 31
 Which on the maidens Nicolas bestowed,
 To rear in honesty their youthful years.
 "O Soul, that speakest words so wise and good, 34
 Tell me," I said, "who wast thou, and why thou
 Alone these worthy praises dost renew ?
 Not without profit shall thy words be found, 37
 If I return the short course to complete
 Of life, which towards its end now wings its way."
 "Tell thee I will, not for the help," he said, 40
 "Which thence I might expect, but for the grace
 Which shines so bright in thee, ere thou art dead.
 The root I was of that most baneful tree, 43
 Which so o'er shadows the whole Christian world,
 That good fruit is from thence but seldom plucked.
 But if Douay, Ghent, Lille and Bruges 46
 Had but the power, vengeance would quickly come :
 For this I pray to Him that judgeth all.
 Down yonder was I as Hugh Capet known : 49
 From me the Philips sprang, and Louis too,
 By whom in recent times France hath been ruled.
 Myself a butcher's son in Paris was. 52
 When the old line of kings came to an end,
 All save the one, who donned the habit grey,
 Tight in my hands I found the sovran reins 55
 Of government, and power so great of new
 Possessions, and myself so rich in friends,
 That to the widowed crown promoted was 58
 The head of my own son, and from his blood
 The consecrated bones of these began.
 Till the grand dowry of Provence removed 61
 From off my race the shame of its descent,
 It was of little worth, still wrought no ill.

- Then it began by violence and lies 64
 Its work of rapine ; and to make amends,
 Seized Ponthieu, Gascony and Normandy.
- To Italy came Charles, and for amends, 67
 A victim made of Conradin ; and next
 Sent Thomas back to heaven for amends.
- A time I see ensue soon after this, 70
 That draweth forth from France another Charles,
 Still better to make known his house and self.
- Alone he comes, unarmed save with the lance 73
 That Judas jousted with ; and wields it so,
 That under it the paunch of Florence bursts.
- From this no lands, but sin and great disgrace 76
 Will he acquire, the heavier all to him,
 As of such damage he makes small account.
- The other, who as prisoner, left his ship, 79
 I see selling his daughter, haggling too
 About her price, like pirates with their slaves.
- O Av'rice, what is left thee more to do, 82
 After thou hast my blood so drawn to thee,
 That for its own flesh it no longer cares ?
- But that sin past and future seem the less, 85
 I see the Fleur-de-Lys in Anagna,
 And in His vicar Christ a prisoner made.
- I see Him now a second time bemocked, 88
 I see the vinegar and gall renewed,
 And between living thieves Him crucified.
- I see the new Pilate, relentless so, 91
 That still unsated, without warrant he
 Against the Temple sets his greedy sail.
- O Lord, my God, in gladness when shall I 94
 Behold the vengeance, which, while hidden still,
 Sweetens Thine anger in its secrecy ?
- What I was saying of that only Bride 97
 Of th' Holy Ghost, that causèd thee just now
 To turn to me for some enlightenment,
 Is for our prayer appointed just so long, 100

As lasts the day ; but when night closeth in,
 We then take up instead a counter strain.

Pygmalion's tale at that hour we relate, 103
 Whom his own greedy lust of gold at once
 Made traitor, thief, and parricide to boot ;

And sordid Midas' miserable fate, 106
 Which followed his inordinate request,
 For which he must men's laughing-stock remain.

Of foolish Achan then each mention makes ; 109
 How he the booty stole, so that e'en here
 The wrath of Joshua seems to gall him still.

Sapphira and her husband we arraign— 112
 And hoof that Heliodorus smote extol ;
 Around the mount goes Polymnestor's name

In infamy, who Polydorus slew. 115
 And last of all cometh the cry, "Crassus !
 Tell us, thou know'st, what is the taste of gold ?"

Sometimes we speak, one loud, another low, 118
 As impulse urges at one time our steps,
 Now at a slower, then more rapid pace ;

However, telling of the good just now, 121
 To which day prompts us, I was not alone,
 But near me then none other raised his voice."

From him already had we gone some way, 124
 And hard were struggling to surmount the path
 With all the force our powers permitted us,

When I did feel the mountain quake, as thing 127
 About to fall ; through me a shiver ran,
 As that which seizes one led forth to death.

Sure not so violently did Delos quake, 130
 Before Latona made therein the nest,
 Wherein she laid the twin born eyes of heav'n.

From every side uprose there then a shout, 133
 Such that the Master nearer drew to me,
 And said : "Doubt nothing while I am thy guide."

Then "*Gloria in Excelsis Deo*" all 136
 Rang out, as far as I could tell from those

Close by, whose shout 'twas possible to hear.
We in suspense and motionless stood still, 139
E'en as the shepherds, who first heard that song,
Until the quaking ceased, and the hymn closed.
Resumed we then our holy pilgrimage, 142
Noting the shades that lay upon the ground,
Returned already to their wonted plaint.
Never did ignorance in strife so keen 145
Stir within me of knowledge such desire,
If recollection here go not astray,
As I seemed then in thought to undergo. 148
By reason of our haste I dared not ask,
And for myself could nothing there descry ;
So went I on in fear and full of thought. 151

CANTO XXI.

*Fifth Round—Avarice and Prodigality—Statius—
Cause of the Earthquake—Statius and Virgil.*

THE innate thirst, which ne'er is satisfied,
 Save with that water, for the grace of which
 The woman of Samaria once prayed,
 Sorely distressed me, and haste urged me on 4
 Behind my guide o'er the encumbered path,
 To pity stirred by the just penalty ;
 When lo ! just as S. Luke for us records 7
 That Christ appeared to two upon the way,
 Uprisen now from the sepulchral cave,
 To us a shade appeared that from behind 10
 Came up, noting the throng about his feet ;
 Nor him had we observed : so he spake first,
 Saying : " My Brothers, God grant you His peace." 13
 At once we turned us round, and Virgil gave
 The countersign respondent thereunto,
 Then he began : " In the Assembly Blest 16
 May the High Court of Truth assign thee peace,
 Which to eternal exile me remits."
 " How now," said he, the while we briskly moved, 19
 " If ye are shades, whom God disowns above,
 Who thus far up His stair hath been your guide ?"
 My teacher then : " If thou regard the marks, 22
 Which this man bears, and which the Angel signs,
 Thou'lt see 'tis right that 'mong the good he reign.
 But because she, who spinneth day and night, 25
 Had not for him as yet drawn off the skein,
 Which Clotho deals, and straitly packs for each,
 His soul, which sister is to thine and mine, 28

In mounting upward could not mount alone,
 Because its eye sees not in mode like ours.
 Wherefore from Hell's wide jaws was I drawn forth, 31
 As guide to show the way, and show I will,
 Onward, as far as my school can conduct.
 But tell us, if thou know, why but just now 34
 The Mountain shook and rocked, and one and all
 Down to its watery base seemed to cry out."
 So well his question hit the needle's eye 37
 Of my desire, that by the hope it gave,
 It made the craving of my thirst less fierce.
 "Thing there is not," 'gan he, "that e'er, save in 40
 Due order, can the holy influence move
 Of this our mountain, or its usage change.
 From all disturbance all up here is free ; 43
 Of this, what heaven from self in self receives,
 Alone, and nothing else, can be the cause.
 Hence neither rain, nor hail, nor snow, nor dew, 46
 Nor hoar frost falleth any higher up
 Than the short stairway of the three degrees.
 Clouds, neither dense nor rare, do here appear, 49
 No lightning flash, not Thaumás' daughter e'en,
 Who yonder oftentimes her station shifts
 Dry vapour never riseth in advance 52
 Above the top of the three steps I named,
 Whereon S. Peter's Vicar sets his feet.
 Earthquakes perchance, more or less, lower down 55
 Occur ; but from winds hidden in the earth,
 I know not how, up here it ne'er hath quaked.
 The quaking here is when some soul perceives 58
 That it is cleansed, so that it mounts, or starts
 To rise ; whereon the shout ye heard ensues.
 The proof of cleansing is the will alone. 61
 Which seizes the astonished soul, now free
 To change her home, and helps the wish in her,
 From first her will was good, but choice holds back, 64
 Which God in Justice, counter to the will,

Inclines to penance, as it once chose sin.
 And I, who in this sorrow have been laid 67
 Five hundred years and more, felt only now
 My will enfranchised for a better home.
 Therefore the quaking thou didst feel, and heard'st 70
 Good spirits through the mountain praise the Lord,
 Whom may He speed soon on their way aloft."
 Thus he ; and as the pleasure is as great 73
 In a fresh draught, as was the thirst before,
 I could not say the boon he granted me.
 And my sage Guide : " Now see I well the net 76
 That holds you here, and how the escape is made ;
 The quaking why, and why your common joy.
 But who thou wast, be pleased that I should learn ; 79
 And why so many ages here thou'st lain,
 This also in reply to me comprize."
 " What time good Titus with the aiding grace 82
 Of heaven's high King took vengeance for the Wounds,
 Whence flowed the Blood, that was by Judas sold,
 That name, which longest lasts, and honours most, 85
 Yonder I bore," the spirit's answer such,
 " Famous enough, but a believer no.
 So sweet the genius of my tuneful song, 88
 That from Toulouse, Rome drew me to herself,
 Where for my brow I earned the myrtle wreath.
 Statius the people yonder name me still : 91
 Of Thebes I sang ; of great Achilles next,
 But on the way sank 'neath the second task.
 As seeds unto mine ardour were the sparks, 94
 That warmed me, of that heaven-enkindled flame,
 Whence many thousands have their light derived ;
 I mean the Æneid, which a mother was 97
 To me, to me a nurse in poesy.
 Without it weighed I not a drachma's worth ;
 And to have yonder lived in those days, when 100
 Virgil was living, I would gladly pass
 A year more than I owe for my release."

- These words made Virgil turn to me a look,
 Which silently did say : " Silence awhile ;"
 But force of will cannot all things control ;
 For smiles and tears so closely follow on
 The passion, by which either is aroused,
 That the sincerest it obey the least.
 I did but smile, as if with twinkling eye,
 Whereon the shade was silent ; but he looked
 Straight in my eyes, expression's fixed abode.
 " So mayst thou well thine arduous task complete,"
 He said : " Yet tell me why thy face but now
 Bestowed on me the glimmer of a smile ?"
 And now on both sides am I fairly caught :
 Silence one bids, the other me conjures
 To speak ; I sigh ; my Master understood
 My meaning, and " Be not afraid," he said,
 " To speak to him ; yea speak, and plainly tell
 What he so curiously demands of us."
 Whereupon I : " Perchance thou marvellest,
 O elder Spirit, at the smile I showed ;
 But greater wonder still will thee possess.
 He, who directs mine eyes to look aloft,
 The Virgil is, from whom thyself didst draw
 The power to sing alike of gods and men.
 If to my smile thou gave some other cause,
 Abandon it as false, and now believe
 'Twas in those words, which thou didst speak of him."
 Already did he stoop to clasp the feet
 Of my Instructor, who exclaimed ; " Brother,
 Not so, for shade art thou, and shade dost see."
 Then as he rose, he said ; " How vast the love
 Thou now can'st measure, that within me glows
 For thee, when I forget our emptiness,
 And treat our shadows as corporeal things."

CANTO XXII.

Ascent into the Sixth Round—The Sin and Conversion of Statius—Illustrious Personages in Limbo—The Sixth Round—Gluttony—Examples of Temperance.

THE Angel had we now behind us left,
 Th' Angel who us had turned to the sixth round
 After erasing from my brow one scar ;
 And them, who yearn for righteousness, had he 4
 Pronounced *Beati*, and with *Sitiunt*,
 Ended the sentence, adding nothing more.
 And up I went much lighter than elsewhere 7
 Through other passes ; and without distress
 Aloft I followed the swift moving sprites :
 When thus began Virgilius : “ A love 10
 By virtue fired, doth aye another fire,
 If but its flame be manifest abroad.
 And so, from that hour when amongst us first 13
 Into hell's limbo Juvenal came down,
 And thy affection for me did disclose,
 My own goodwill for thee hath ever been 16
 Such as ne'er bound me to a man unseen,
 So that these stairs will now seem short to me.
 But tell me, and forgive me as a friend, 19
 If too familiar I relax the rein,
 And as a friend do thou converse with me :
 Within thy breast how could a place be found 22
 For avarice, amid the stock of sense
 Wherewith thy diligence had stored thee well? ”
 These words with Statius at first produced 25
 A gentle smile : and answer then he made :
 “ Thine every word is a dear sign of love.

- Ofttimes in verity do things appear 28
 Which furnish doubt with false material,
 Since the true reasons in concealment lie.
 Thy question voucheth for thy full belief 31
 That I in former life was covetous,
 By reason p'rhaps of circle where I was.
 Now be assured that av'rice was removed 34
 Too far from me, and disproportion such
 Thousands of lunar months have punished.
 And had I not my care directed right, 37
 When the appeal I heard that thou dost make,
 As though in anger with the race of men,
Where dost thou not, accursed greed of gold,
Drive on the appetite of mortal man ? 40
 I might be rolling weights in dismal joust.
 Then I perceived our hands can spread their wings 43
 Too wide in waste, and as of other sins,
 Of this also I then repented me.
 How many with cropped polls will rise again 46
 In ignorance, which leaves them of this sin
 Impenitent in life, and their last hour !
 Now learn that the transgression, which flings back 49
 By its clear contrary another sin,
 Along with that dries up its verdure here.
 Wherefore if with this people I have dwelt, 52
 Who for their avarice weep, to purge myself
 From sin to theirs contrary this befell."
 "Now when thy muse did sing the cruel arms 55
 Which twofold sorrow to Jocasta wrought,"
 Said the great songman of Bucolic verse,
 "Seeing that Clio strikes the string with thee, [good, 58
 'Twould seem the Faith, without which works, though
 Are vain, had not as faithful 'stablish'd thee.
 If so it be, what sun, or tapers what 61
 Thy darkness so dispersed, that afterwards
 Thou didst behind the Fisherman set sail ?"
 And he to him : "Thou first didst point my way 64

Towards Parnassus in its grotts to drink ;
 And then, next after God, didst give me light.
 Thou wast as one that walks by night, and bears 67
 A lamp behind him, to himself no help,
 But well instructing those that follow him,
 What time thou saidst : *The Ages are renewed ;* 70
Justice returns, and man's primeval days ;
And a new progeny from heaven descends,
 Poet and Christian I became through thee ; 73
 But that thou may'st more clearly see my sketch,
 I will put forth my hand to colour it.
 Already the whole world was pregnant with 76
 The true Belief, which messengers, sent forth
 From the Eternal King had sown broadcast ;
 And thy own words, quoted by me before, 79
 With the new preachers were so consonant,
 That 'twas my custom to resort to them.
 They came before me in such saintly guise, 82
 That when Domitian persecuted them,
 Their sorrows were not left unwept by me ;
 And long as I still sojourned upon earth 85
 I succoured them ; and their just rule of life
 Made me disparage every other sect :
 And ere unto the streams of Thebes I led 88
 My Greeks in Poetry, I was baptized ;
 But through my fears was Christian secretly,
 And long time showed as Pagan outwardly ; 91
 For this lukewarmness the fourth circle was
 My round for more than full four hundred years,
 And now do thou, who didst lift up the veil, 94
 Which hid from me the good I tell thee of,
 While in the leisure still of our ascent,
 Tell me where Terence is, our ancient friend, 97
 Cœcilius, Plautus, Varro, if thou know ;
 Tell me if they are damned, and where their haunt."
 "All these, Persius, and I, and many more"
 My Leader thus replied, "are with that Greek, 100

- Whom more than any else the Muses nursed,
 In the first ward of the dark prison house. 103
 About the mountain oft times we converse,
 Which ever keeps our nurses with itself.
 Euripides and Antipho with us 106
 Are there, Simonides and Agatho,
 With many a Greek that won the laurel wreath.
 Of thine own characters may there be seen 109
 Antigone, Argia and Deiphyle,
 Ismene too in wonted sadness wrapped.
 There is she seen who did Langia show ; 112
 Teiresias' daughter there, Thetis as well,
 And with her sisters Deidamia too."
 And now in silence stood the Poets twain, 115
 Eager anew to make a full survey,
 Freed now at length from walls and steep ascent.
 Already of the day's handmaidens four 118
 Were left behind, and at the chariot pole
 Pointed the fifth its flaming horn aloft ;
 When my Guide said : " I trow that towards the edge 121
 'Tis well we keep the right-hand shoulder turned,
 Circling the mount, as we are wont to do."
 So custom here our best instructor was, 124
 And on our way we went less doubtingly
 In the approval of that worthy soul.
 They moved in front, and I alone behind, 127
 Lending an ear attentive to their words,
 Which in the poet's art informed my mind.
 But soon did interrupt the sweet discourse 130
 A tree, which midway in our path we found,
 With apples pleasant in their scent, and good ;
 And as contracts a fir-tree, tapering up 133
 Branch after branch, so downward this drew in,
 That none, I ween, might o'er it upward climb.
 Upon the side, which to our path was barr'd, 136
 From the high rock there fell a limpid stream,
 And o'er the upper leaves diffused its spray.

- The poets both unto the tree drew near, 139
And from within the leaves there came a voice
That cried: "For this food ye shall hunger still."
Again: "Mary thought rather how complete, 142
And honoured most the marriage feast should be,
Than for her own mouth, which now pleads for you.
The dames of ancient Rome were well content 145
With water for their drink, and Daniel too,
To meat indifferent, wisdom gained instead.
The first age, which was beautiful as gold, 148
By hunger made the acorns savoury,
And in its thirst found nectar in each stream.
Locusts and honey were the dainties which 151
Nourished the Baptist in the wilderness;
Wherefore is he in glory, and so great,
As in the Gospel is set forth to you."

CANTO XXIII.

*The Sixth Round—Gluttony—Appearance of the Gluttonous—
Forese Donati—Nella—The Women of Florence.*

WHILE through the green leaves with mine eyes I
 pried,
 As we may see a man will often do,
 Who wastes his life after the little birds,
 My more than father said to me : “ My son, 4
 Now onward, for the time allotted us
 Must be more usefully distributed.”
 I turned my face, and not less quick my steps, 7
 Up to the Sages, who conversed so well,
 They made the journey no account to me.
 And lo! in tones of wailing chant was heard 10
 “ *Labia mea Domine,*” in fashion such
 As brought forth joy and sorrow in one birth.
 “ O dearest Father, what is this I hear ? ” 13
 So I began ; and he : “ Shadows that pass,
 The knot perchance unloosening of their debt.”
 As pilgrims, who, in meditation bent, 16
 O’ertaking on the road a stranger band,
 Will turn towards it, but without a halt,
 So from behind us, at a quicker pace, 19
 Coming, and passing by, a throng of souls,
 Silent, in holy wonder gazed at us.
 With each the eye was dull and sunken deep, 22
 Pallid the face, and wasted so the flesh
 That from the bones the skin assumed its form.
 I trow that thus to utter cuticle 25
 Not Erysichthon was so withered up
 By hunger, when in greatest fear of it.
 Within myself I said in thought : “ Behold 28

- The folk who whilom lost Jerusalem,
 When Mary in her own son fleshed her teeth.”
 Their eyeholes were like rings stripped of their gems. 31
 Who in the face of man can read *OMO*,
 Might there well recognise the letter *M*.
 Who would believe an apple's fragrance could, 34
 Breeding desire, inflict such chastisement,
 Or scent of water, if he knew not why?
 I still was wondering whence such hunger came, 37
 For not as yet was manifest the cause
 Of their sad leanness and the shrivelled skin,
 And lo! a shade towards me turned his eyes, 40
 From deep within his head, and looking hard,
 Cried loudly then: “What grace to me is this?
 Never should I have recognized the face, 43
 But by the voice to me was clearly shown,
 That which in feature was entirely lost.
 This spark within me lighted up at once 46
 My recognition of the altered mouth,
 And once again I saw Forese's face.
 “Ah! question not this shrivelled leprosy, 49
 Which doth my skin discolour,” so he prayed,
 “Nor yet the lack of flesh, that I may have;
 But tell me truly of thyself, and who 52
 Those two souls are that form thine escort there:
 Delay not ere thy story thou relate.”
 “Thy face, which I bewept, already dead, 55
 Gives me no less a grief to mourn for now.”
 I answered him, “seeing it so deformed.
 But say, in God's Name, what denudes you thus; 58
 Nor bid me speak, while still in wonder lost,
 For ill speaks he, whom other thought absorbs.”
 And he: “'Tis by Eternal Counsel that 61
 A virtue falls upon the stream and tree
 We've left behind, whereby I'm wasted thus.
 This people all, who mingle tears and chant, 64
 For the excess indulged in appetite,

In thirst and hunger here are sanctified.
 In us desire to eat and drink takes fire 67
 From scent exhaled from apple, and from spray,
 Which o'er the foliage is diffused abroad.
 And not once only, but as we pursue 70
 Our round, afresh springs up our punishment ;
 Not punishment, but solace I should say ;
 For to the tree the same Will draweth us, 73
 That drew the Christ with joy to cry "*Eli,*"
 When by His opened veins He set us free "
 And I to him : " Forese, from that day 76
 When thou didst change the world for better life,
 Five years till now have not yet rolled around.
 If then the power to sin had ceased in thee, 79
 Ere yet the hour of godly sorrow, which
 Re-marries us to God, had supervened,
 How com'st thou here so high ? For I had thought 82
 To find thee still abiding down below,
 Where time for time doth restitution make " ?
 And he to me : " Thus quickly was I brought 85
 To drink the sweet wormwood of suffering
 By my own Nella's overflowing tears.
 By her devoted prayers and by her sighs 88
 She drew me from the hill of hope deferred,
 And from the other circles set me free.
 So much to God the dearer, and more prized 91
 My widowed darling is, whom I so loved,
 As in good works she still more lonely is ;
 For the Barbagia of Sardinia. 94
 More modest in its women is by far,
 Than the Barbagia I have left her in.
 O my dear Brother, what would'st have me say ? 97
 A time already comes into our sight,
 At which to-day will be no ancient date,
 When dames of Florence from the pulpit shall, 100
 Unto their shame, forbidden be to walk
 Abroad with bosom and the paps exposed.

- Were e'er Barbarians known, or Saracens, 103
 Who were in need, to make them cover'd go,
 Of canon law, or other discipline ?
 But if the shameless wretches were assured 106
 Of what swift heaven doth for them prepare,
 In howling would their mouths be open now.
 For if prevision here deceive me not, 109
 Sooner on them will sorrow fall, than chin
 Be bearded of the babe now sung to sleep.
 Ah! Brother, now no longer hide thyself; 112
 See how not I alone, but all these folk
 Gaze on the spot from which thou hid'st the sun."
 Then I to him : " If thou recall to mind 115
 What with me thou wast once, and I with thee,
 Present remembrance will be grievous still.
 From that life he, who walks in front, turned me 118
 But two days since, when in full rounded orb
 The sister of him yonder showed herself ;
 (I pointed to the sun,) he from the depth 121
 Of night hath brought me from the truly dead
 In this true flesh, that follows in his steps.
 Thence have his cheering counsels led me up, 124
 Scaling and compassing this mountain height,
 Which now sets right you, whom the world set wrong.
 So far, he says, he'll bear me company, 127
 Till I arrive where Beatrice shall be ;
 And there needs must I without him remain.
 Virgil it is, who doth instruct me thus, 130
 (And him I pointed to) the other is
 That Shade, for whom just now, o'er every slope,
 Your kingdom quaked, which now discharges him. 133

CANTO XXIV.

*The Sixth Round—Gluttony—Forese Donati—Piccarda—
Bonagiunta da Lucca—Martin VI.—Ubaldin dalla Pila—
Bonifazio—Messer Marchese—La Gentucca—Corso Donati—
A Second Mystic Tree—Examples of Gluttony—
The Angel of Abstinence.*

OUR words checked not our course, nor it our words,
 But, still conversing, on we stoutly pushed,
 As ship impelled before a favouring breeze.
 The shades the while, which looked like things twice dead, 4
 Glared through the caverns of their eyes, amazed
 At me, when they perceived I was alive.
 And I, proceeding with my story, said, 7
 "He peradventure moves more slowly up,
 Than he had done but for another's sake.
 But if thou know, say where Piccarda is: 10
 Say too if any one I see of note
 Among these people that observe me thus."
 "My sister, all so fair and virtuous, 13
 Which most I know not, weareth now her crown
 In high Olympus mid triumphant joy."
 So far at first; and then: "Here nought forbids 16
 Our naming each, so utterly is drain'd
 All semblance of ourselves by this poor fare.
 This one," he pointed with his finger, "See, 19
 Is Bonagiunta da Lucca; the face
 Beyond him, still more pinched than all the rest,
 Held once the Holy Church within his arms: 22
 He came from Tours, and purgeth now with fast
 Eels of Bolsena and Vernaccian wine."
 And many more he named me, one by one; 25

- And to be named I thought them so content,
That I observed for this not one black look. .
- I saw the lord of Pila, Ubaldin, 28
In hunger grind his teeth, and Boniface,
Who with his crosier pastured many flocks.
- Messer Marchese too I saw, who erst 31
At Forlì did carouse at ease, and though
Less thirsty there, he never had enough.
- But as a man looks round, and from the rest 34
Makes choice of one, so him of Lucca I,
Who seemed to have more cognizance of me.
- He muttered ; and some sound of " Gentucca " 37
I heard proceed from where he felt the wound
Of Justice, which there wastes them so away.
- " O Soul," I said, " that eager seem'st to speak 40
With me, speak so that I may understand,
And with thy speech content thyself and me."
- " A girl is born, that wears not wimple yet," 43
'Gan he, " who unto thee most pleasant will
My city make, howe'er by men reviled.
- With this prevision thou shalt go thy way ; 46
If in my muttering thou have been at fault,
The true events will make all clear to thee.
- But tell me if I here see him, whose pen 49
First brought to light the new rhymes, that begin :
" Ladies, who have Intelligence of Love."
- And I to him : " A man am I, who, when 52
Love breathes on me, take note ; and in the mode
He speaks within, I go declaring it."
- " Brother," said he, " I see at once the knot 55
Which me, the Notary, and Guittone held
So far behind the sweet new style I hear.
- And well I see too how the pen with you 58
Runs closely after him who thus dictates,
Which surely with our own was not the case.
- And he who strives farther than this to look, 61
No difference sees 'tween one and other style."

And then, as well content, he held his peace.
 As birds that winter on the banks of Nile, 64
 In airy squadron sometimes form themselves,
 Then faster fly, and move in single file,
 So all the people that were gathered there, 67
 With faces turned from us, quickened their pace,
 By leanness nimble and a hearty will.
 An as the runner, when fatigued he is, 70
 Lets his companions pass and slowly walks,
 Till from his chest he blows the tightness off,
 So did Forese let the pious flock 73
 Sweep by, while he came on behind with me,
 Saying : " When shall I see thee yet again ?"
 Said I : " I know not how long I may live ; 76
 Yet my return cannot so speedy be,
 But my desire will first have reached this shore :
 Because the place, wherein my life was set, 79
 Each day sheds off its goodness more and more,
 And to a grievous downfall seems ordained."
 " Now go," he said, " for him, who guiltiest is 82
 Of all, I see dragged at a horse's tail
 Down to the valley where no pardon is.
 At every stride the beast speeds faster on, 85
 Swifter and swifter, until with a blow
 It leaves the body there vilely undone ;
 And not much longer have those wheels to turn." 88
 (To heaven he raised his eyes) " ere clear to thee
 Is what my words cannot more clearly say.
 Stay thou then here, for time so precious is 91
 Within this realm, that I do lose too much,
 Thus walking with thee at thy even pace."
 As from advancing cavalcade sometimes 94
 The captain of a troop will gallop forth,
 And rides to win the honour of first blow ;
 So with more bounding strides he went from us ; 97
 And on the road I with the two remained,
 Who were such mighty marshals of the world.

- And when before us he had pushed so far, 100
 That in pursuit of him mine eyes became
 What my mind was to apprehend his words,
 I saw with heavy boughs and full of life 103
 Another apple tree, and not far off;
 For by a sudden turn I came on it.
 People beneath I saw with hands outstretched, 106
 I know not what imploring, towards the boughs,
 Like little children vainly clamouring,
 Who beg ; and he they beg from, answers not ; 109
 But to give keener edge to their desire,
 Dangles the thing they want, and hides it not.
 As disenchantèd, they went on their way. 112
 And we forthwith to the great tree came up,
 Which prayers so many and such tears rejects :
 " *Pass onward ye, nor nearer seek to come ;* 115
Up higher is the tree of which Eve ate,
An offshoot from it did this plant grow up."
 From out the leaves thus spoke I know not who ; 118
 So Virgil, Statius and I, drawn up
 In order close, passed on the rising side.
 "Remember," said the voice, "the accursèd ones, 121
 Conceived in a cloud, who, drunk with wine,
 Fought against Theseus with their bifold breasts ;
 The Hebrews too, luxurious as they drank, 124
 Whom Gideon would not for his comrades own.
 When towards Midian down the hills he came."
 Thus closely skirting one of the two sides, 127
 We passed, hearing the sins of gluttony,
 Followed already by their wretched wage.
 Then opening out along the lonely road, 130
 For a good thousand paces on we went,
 Without a word, in meditation each.
 "What think ye, as ye go, ye three alone ?" 133
 Exclaimed a sudden voice, that startled me,
 As terrified and coward beasts will shy.
 I raised my head to see who it might be, 136

And ne'er in burning furnace was there seen
Metal or glass, so glittering and so red,
As one I saw, who said : " If you it please 139
To mount above, here it behoves to turn ;
This way the road for him who seeketh peace."
His aspect had deprived me of my sight ; 142
Wherefore behind my masters I retired,
Like one who follows by the sound he hears.
And as, when heralding the dawn of day, 145
The breath of May is stirred, and sheds perfume
Impregnate all with herbage and with flowers,
Such did I feel a breeze, that on my brow 148
Played full, and well I felt the pinion wave,
That shed the effluence of ambrosia round ;
And I heard say : " Blessed are they whom grace 151
So great illumes, that love of palate ne'er
Creates the fume of passionate desire,
Who hunger only so far as is just." 154

CANTO XXV.

*Ascent to the Seventh Round—Theory of Generation—
Infusion of the Soul into the body—Bodies aerial after
Death—The Seventh Round—Examples of Chastity.*

AN hour it was when the ascent ill brook'd
 Delay; for now the sun his noontide round
 Had left to Taurus, and to Scorpio night;
 Wherefore as doth the man that halteth not, 4
 But pusheth on, whate'er may catch his eye,
 If pierced by goad of sharp necessity,
 So through the gap did we our entrance make, 7
 One before other, clambering up the stair,
 So strait, it forceth climbers to divide.
 As the young stork doth upward raise its wing, 10
 In the desire to fly, but ventures not
 To leave the nest, and lets it droop again,
 Such was myself, with wish inflamed, then quenched, 13
 To ask, till finally I showed the form
 Of one, who hath made up his mind to speak.
 And not that we sped quickly on, forbore 16
 The father sweet, who said: "My son, let fly
 The bow of speech, thou to the barb hast drawn."
 Assured thus, I opened then my mouth, 19
 And I began: "How in a place where need
 Of nourishment is not, can one grow lean?"
 "If Meleager thou recall, and how 22
 He wasted in the wasting of a brand,
 This would not seem to thee so dour a thing:
 And wouldst thou think how at thy quiver will 25
 Thine image in the mirror quiver too,
 What now seems stiff, would pliant seem to thee;

- But that thou find the inner rest thou would'st, 28
 Lo ! here is Staius, whom I call, and beg
 That he be now the healer of thy wounds."
 "If I unveil to him the things eterne 31
 Seen here, where thou art present," Staius said,
 "No blame to me ; thee may I not deny."
 Then he began : " My Son, if now thy mind 34
 Observe, and to itself receive my words,
 They for the " How " thou askest, will be Light.
 A perfect blood, which never is absorbed 37
 By thirsty veins, and as remainder stays,
 Like food which from the table is removed,
 Receives creative virtue in the heart 40
 For all the limbs of man, like that blood which
 Flows through the veins to change itself to them.
 Again digested, this sinks where not speech, 43
 But silence best befits, and thence distils
 Upon another's blood, in Nature's vase.
 Together these, one with the other meet, 46
 One to be acted on, and one to act,
 By the perfection of its primal source.
 Joined to the other, this begins to work, 49
 Coagulating first, and quickening then
 What for material it solidified.
 The active virtue, now become a soul, 52
 As of a plant, (but so far different,
 One's on its way, the other at the goal)
 Worketh so far, that now it moves and feels, 55
 Like a sea fungus ; and next sets itself
 To shape the powers whereof it hath the germ.
 Taller and broader now the virtue spreads, 58
 That springs, my son, from the engenderer's heart,
 Wherein for all the limbs nature provides.
 But how the animal a speaking child 61
 Becomes, thou seest not yet ; and this it was
 That erst misled one wiser than thyself,
 In that the doctrine held by him disjointed 64

The soul and the potential intellect,
 Since he no organ saw assumed by this.
 But open to the coming truth thy breast, 67
 And know that soon as in the embryo
 The brain-articulation is complete,
 With joy the Primal Mover turns to it, 70
 As masterpiece of Nature's skill, and breathes
 On it new spirit, with a virtue filled,
 That draws to its own substance all found there 73
 Of active force, and with it forms one soul,
 That lives, and feels and on itself re-acts.
 And that thou mayst less wonder at my words, 76
 Consider the sun's heat, which becomes wine,
 Joined with the juices which the vine distils.
 And when the thread of Lachesis is spent, 79
 The soul released from flesh, by innate force
 Bears off with it the human and divine.
 The other faculties are wholly mute, 82
 But memory, intelligence and will
 Are keener much in action than before.
 Without a pause most wondrously it falls 85
 Of its own self on one or other shore,
 And here first learns its own allotted path.
 Soon as by place it hath been circumscribed, 88
 A plastic virtue sheds its rays around
 In form and measure like the limbs in life ;
 And as the air, when it is full of rain, 91
 And upon it another pours its beams,
 With divers colours shows itself adorned,
 So the surrounding air doth there assume 94
 The form, which virtually the soul, when now
 Established in its place, imprints on it.
 And thenceforth like the little points of flame, 97
 Which follow fire, wherever it is moved,
 Upon the spirit this new form attends.
 And since by it the soul its presence shows, 100
 'Tis called henceforth a shade, and by it too

- Each sense is organized, e'en sight itself.
 From it we have a voice, by it we laugh, 103
 Or by it shed our tears, and vent our sighs,
 As thou could'st hear in passing o'er the mount.
 And as a wish and each emotion else 106
 Affect us in their turn, such the shade's form,
 And such the cause of what perplexes thee."
 And now the last bend of the road we'd reached, 109
 And to the right hand we had turned our steps,
 When our attention a new care engaged.
 There the high cliff shoots forth in flames of fire, 112
 And from the roadway blasts of wind blow in,
 Which drive them back, and clear the path of them.
 So it behoved us on the open side 115
 To move in single file ; the fire I feared
 On this side, and on that a fall below.
 My Leader said : " As by this place we pass, 118
 Needs must we keep a tight check on our eyes ;
 A little thing might to great error lead."
 "*Summæ Deus clementiæ* in chant 121
 Forth from the bosom of the flames I heard,
 Which made me no less careful to turn round.
 And spirits walking in the fires I saw ; 124
 Wherefore I looked at their steps and my own,
 From time to time dividing my regard :
 Upon the words which close the hymn, straightway 127
 They cried aloud : "*Virum non cognosco* ;"
 And then in low tones re-commenced the hymn.
 This ended, yet once more they cried : " In grove 130
 Diana dwelt, and banished Helicé,
 Who had the poison felt of Venus' cup."
 Their song they then resumed, and shouted names 133
 Of women and of husbands that were chaste,
 As virtue and the marriage bond impose.
 Such method, as I trow, sufficient is, 136
 For all the time the fire is scorching them :
 With such a cure and diet such 'tis fit.
 That the last wound of all should be closed up. 139

CANTO XXVI.

The Seventh Round—Wantonness.

The Two Groups of Wantons—Examples of Wantonness—

Guido Guinicelli—Arnaldo Daniello.

WHILE thus along the edge in single file
 We were advancing, the good Master oft
 Did say : “ Beware, ’tis well I warn thee here.”
 On my right shoulder now the sun struck down, 4
 And with his streaming rays o’er all the west
 Changed into white the azure of the sky ;
 And with my shadow I the ruddier made 7
 The fire appear, at the mere sight of which
 I saw shades many, as they passed, take note.
 This was the cause that an occasion gave 10
 For them to speak of me : and they began
 To say : “ No phantom body this of his.”
 Then toward me, near as they were able, some 13
 Approached, but ever with a due regard
 Not to transgress the bounds, wherein they burned,
 “ O thou, who movest, not through idleness, 16
 Behind the other two, but from respect perchance,
 Reply to me, who burn in thirst and fire :
 Not I alone of thy reply have need, 19
 For all these thirstier are for it, than e’er
 Was Æthiop or Indian for cool draught,
 Tell us how thou makest thyself a wall 22
 Against the Sun, as if thou hadst not yet
 Within the meshes of death’s net been caught ? ”
 So did one speak, and I already had 25
 Myself explained, had I not now been fixed
 On an appearance of yet stranger form :

For in the middle of the burning path 28
 A group came facing opposite the first,
 That fixed my gaze upon them in suspense.
 From either side I saw the shades pass on, 31
 And each the other with a hurried kiss
 Embrace, contented with this brief salute.
 E'en so amid their dusky troop one ant 34
 Muzzle to muzzle doth another greet,
 Perhaps to learn its route, or how each fares.
 Soon as the friendly greeting is despatched, 37
 Or ever they have thence a first step ta'en,
 Each party strives the other's shout to drown.
 "Sodom, Gomorrha," the new comers cried ; 40
 And those : " Pasiphaë enters the cow ;
 So to her pleasure the young bull may rush."
 And then as cranes, when to Riphean heights 43
 Some wing their way, and to the desert some,
 Those fighting shy of sunshine, these of ice,
 So goes one company, the other comes, 46
 Returning both in tears to their first chants,
 And to the cry that best becomes them each.
 And once again near to me, as before, 49
 The very same, who had besought me, drew,
 With looks expressive of desire to hear.
 I, who had now their wishes noted twice, 52
 Began : " O souls, secure one day, come when
 It may, to enter on a life of peace,
 Not in raw youth nor full ripe age remain 55
 My limbs on earth, but with me they are here,
 With their own blood and every ligature.
 Up here I go to be no longer blind : 58
 On high a Lady dwells, who wins us grace,
 Whereby this mortal through your world I bear.
 But to your dearest wish so may content 61
 Quickly arrive, and Heaven receive you home,
 Where all is love, in ampler space outspread,
 Tell me, that I thereof may make my note, 64

Who are ye ; and the other crowd, what is't,
 That rearward goes direct away from you ?" 67
 Not otherwise in stupor stands perplexed .
 The mountaineer, who all dumb-founded stares,
 When rough and rude into the town he comes,
 Than those shades in their several looks appeared ; 70
 But as the weight of wonderment passed off,
 Which in the nobler heart is soon allayed,
 " Blessed be thou," so he began that first 73
 The question asked, " who would'st from these confines
 Freight an experience for a better life !
 The folk, who come not with us, did offend 76
 In that for which triumphant Cæsar once
 Heard himself hailed insultingly as Queen ;
 Wherefore they leave us crying Sodoma, 79
 In self reproach, as thou didst hear thyself,
 And by their shame heighten the glow of fire.
 Our sin however was hermaphrodite ; 82
 But in that we outraged humanity,
 Like brute beasts following our appetite,
 To our disgrace by us recited is, 85
 Whene'er we part from them, the name of her
 Who bestialized herself in wicker beast.
 Our deeds thou knowest now, and what our guilt ; 88
 But if perchance thou'dst know the names we bear,
 No time is there, nor know I how to tell.
 But for myself I'll meet thy wish : and I 91
 Am Guido Guinicelli ; ere mine end
 Repenting well, I now do wash me clean."
 What in Lycurgus' frenzy his two sons 94
 Became when they again their mother saw,
 Such I became, (but rise not to their height),
 When I heard him my father style himself, 97
 As of the others, better far than I,
 Who practice the sweet rhymes of playful love,
 Nought hearing, saying nought, pensive I moved, 100
 In backward gaze fixed long time upon him,

- But for the fire no nearer I approached.
 Still when mine eyes had feasted to the full, 103
 I to his service promptly gave myself,
 And all I had, with pledge that sanctions trust.
 And he to me : "Thou leavest an impress 106
 So clear, in what I hear, that it
 Lethe shall ne'er erase, nor even dim.
 But if thy words indeed have truly sworn, 109
 Tell me the cause, why thou dost show to me,
 By word and look, that thou hold'st me thus dear."
 And I to him : "Those your sweet ditties, which, 112
 Long as the modern use shall last, will make
 The very ink that writes them dear to me."
 "Brother," he said, "yon spirit that I mark 115
 With finger now," (he pointed one in front)
 "A better workman was i'th' mother tongue.
 In verse of love and in romance of prose 118
 He surpassed all; and let the idiots talk,
 Who think the man of Limoges him excels.
 Hearsay, not truth, attracts the ear of such, 121
 And so they settle in opinion down,
 Ere art or reason hath by them been heard.
 Thus many ancients with Guittone did, 124
 With shout on shout adjudging him the prize,
 Till with most persons Truth hath gained the day.
 And now, if privilege thou have so great, 127
 That entrance to the Cloister is vouchsafed,
 Where of the College Christ Lord Abbot is,
 One Paternoster say to Him for me, 130
 For all that we may need in this our world,
 Where power to sin no longer is with us."
 And then perchance to give the other place, 133
 Who had pressed close, he vanished in the fire,
 As fish in water disappears below.
 I drew a little nearer to the form 136
 He'd pointed me; and said my strong desire
 Had ready for his name an honoured place.

He with prompt courtesy at once began :	139
" So pleasant is your courteous request, Nor can, nor will I, who I am, conceal.	
Arnaud am I, who move in tears and song ;	142
Contrite, I see the folly of the past, And joyous see the longed for day advance.	
Therefore do I implore thee by that Power,	145
Which guides thee to the summit of the stairs, Be mindful in due time of my distress ;"	
He hid him then in the refining fire.	148

CANTO XXVII.

*The Seventh Round—Wantonness—The Angel of Purity—
Passage through the Fire—Ascent into the Earthly Paradise—
Virgil's Last Words.*

AS when his earliest rays are quiv'ring there,
 Where once his Maker pourèd out His blood,
 While Ebro falls with Libra overhead,
 And since noontide the Ganges' waves have boiled ; 4
 So stood the sun, and daylight so declined,
 When God's glad Angel unto us appeared. 6
 Outside the flame upon the verge he stood, 7
 While he "*Beati mundo corde*" sang
 In voice more living far than is our own.
 "Farther none goes but through the biting fire : 10
 So therein enter, O ye holy souls,
 And to the hymns beyond turn no deaf ear,"
 Such were his words as close to him we stood. 13
 When them I understood, such I became
 As one, who in the felon's ditch is laid.
 My claspèd hands I stretched on high, and gazed 16
 Upon the fire, and vividly recalled
 The bodies I had seen of men in flames.
 Towards me then my kindly escorts turned, 19
 And unto me said Virgil : "O my son,
 Here may be torture, but it is not death.
 Remember, O remember ; and if I 22
 Led thee in safety e'en on Geryon's back,
 What shall I now do, nearer unto God ?
 Be well assured, if in the very heart 25
 Of this flame thou should'st stand a thousand years,
 Thou should'st not be the balder by a hair.
 And if perchance thou think I play thee false, 28
 Draw near, and test it, for full certainty,
 With thine own hands upon thy mantle's hem.
 Then cast away, away I say, all fear ; 31

- Turn hitherward, and fearlessly advance."
 Yet still I halt, to voice of conscience deaf.
- When he saw me stand obstinately thus, 34
 Somewhat disturbed he said : " Now look my son,
 Only this wall 'tween thee and Beatrice."
- As at the name of Thisbe, Pyramus 37
 Opened his eyes in death, and gazed on her,
 What time the mulberry to vermilion turned,
 E'en so relaxing my obduracy, 40
 I turned to my sage Guide, hearing the name,
 Which ever in my mind is shooting up.
- Whereon with kindly nod, he said : " How's this? 43
 Should we remain here now? " and then he smiled,
 As on a child that's with an apple won.
- Into the fire, in front of me, he went, 46
 Praying that Statius would behind me come,
 Who for a long way had between us walked.
- When once within, I could have cast myself 49
 In boiling glass, to find a cooler place,
 Such the immeasurable burning there.
- My gentle Father, to encourage me, 52
 Spake only as we went of Beatrice,
 Saying : " Methinks e'en now I see her eyes."
- A voice beyond kept guiding us, that aye 55
 Sang on the while ; and we attent to it
 Alone, emerged where the ascent began.
- " *Venite, Benedicti Patris mei,*" 58
 Sounded within a light that shone around,
 Such as o'erwhelmed me, and I could not look.
- " The sun departs," it added ; " evening comes ; 61
 Stay ye not here, but hasten on your steps,
 While yet the West is not in blackness hid."
- Straight upward rose the passage through the rock, 64
 In such direction that in front of me
 I blocked the rays of the now setting sun.
- But little of the stair had we essayed, 67
 When as my shadow failed, the sages knew,

And I, the sun behind us had gone down.
 And ere all round its vast immensity 70
 Th' horizon had become one stretch of gloom,
 And night was everywhere distributed,
 Each of us of a stairstep made a bed ; 73
 For such the nature of the hill, from us
 It took the power more than the will to mount.
 As while they chew the cud, the gentle goats 76
 Lie still, nimble afore in sauciness
 On mountain height, as yet unfilled with food,
 All silent in the shade, while glows the sun, 79
 Watched by the shepherd, who upon his staff
 Leans, and thus leaning waits on their repose ;
 And as the herdsman lodges in the field, 82
 Watching all night alongside of his flock,
 That no wild beast break in to scatter it,
 Such were we then ourselves, the three of us, 85
 I like the goat, and shepherds they to me,
 Pent in on either side by the high cliff.
 Little from thence could be discerned outside ; 88
 But in that little could I see the stars,
 Brighter and larger shine than is their wont.
 Thus pondering, and with gaze fixed thus on them, 91
 Sleep seized on me, sleep that doth oftentimes,
 Ere the event occurs, know its report.
 What time I think as from the east her rays 94
 First on the mountain Cytherea shed,
 Who ever seems aglow in fire of love,
 Youthful and fair, me-thought I saw in dream 97
 A Lady o'er a meadow pass along,
 Collecting flowers, and in her song she said,
 "Let one, who fain would ask my name, know well, 100
 I Leah am, and busy go around
 With my fair hands to gather me a wreath.
 To please me with reflection in the glass 103
 I deck me here ; my sister Rachel ne'er
 Through all the livelong day her mirror leaves ;

- To see her own fair eyes is her delight, 106
 As mine with busy hand to deck me fair :
 Her Contemplation, Action me contents.”
- And now through brightness in advance of dawn, 109
 Which unto pilgrims aye more welcome breaks,
 As on returning nearer home they lodge,
 The shades of darkness fled on every side ; 112
 And with them went my sleep ; so I arose,
 Finding the mighty masters risen too.
- “ That pleasant apple, in pursuit of which 115
 The care of mortals climbs so many boughs,
 To-day will give to all thy hunger peace.”
- These and like words, as towards me he looked, 118
 Did Virgil speak, and never were there gifts,
 That could a pleasure yield of equal charm.
- So eagerly did wish on wish crowd in 121
 To reach the goal above, that at each step,
 I felt my wings grow stronger for the flight.
- When the whole stairway from below was scaled, 124
 And we now stood upon the topmost tread,
 Virgil then fixed on me a stedfast eye,
- And said : “ The temporal and the eternal fire 127
 Thou’st seen, my son, and to a place art come,
 Where of myself nought further I discern.
- I’ve brought thee here by knowledge and with skill ; 130
 Henceforth thy pleasure for thy leader take :
 Steep paths and narrow thou hast left behind.
- Behold the sun, which shines upon thy brow, 133
 See the fine grass, the flowers and all the shrubs,
 Which of itself alone this land brings forth.
- Until in gladness those fair eyes arrive, 136
 Which by their tears drew me at first to thee,
 Here canst thou sit, and ’midst it all canst walk.
- No further word nor sign from me expect ; 139
 Free and upright and sound is now thy will,
 And sin ’twould be its bidding not to do ;
 Bishop and King of self I hail thee now.” 142

CANTO XXVIII.

*The Earthly Paradise—Lethe—The Solitary Lady—
Origin of Water and Wind in the Divine Grove—
Character of the Place.*

EAGER already in and round to search
 The grove divine, thick planted, full of life,
 That to mine eyes tempered the young day's glare,
 Without delay I passed the boundary line, 4
 And step by step paced slowly o'er the plain,
 Across the sward mid fragrance on all sides.
 Softly a breeze, that in itself had nought 7
 To change its course, upon my forehead played
 With stroke no heavier than a gentle breath ;
 Wherewith the fronds in easy tremor waved, 10
 Inclining all together to the point
 Whence first the holy mount its shadow casts ;
 And yet from their erect position not 13
 So swayed, that little birds on topmost spray
 Should cease to practice all their various skill ;
 But filled with joy, the early breezes they 16
 With singing welcomed, hidden in the leaves,
 Which to their treble murmuring bass supplied,
 Such as is that, which swells from bough to bough, 19
 Through the deep pine grove on Chiassi's shore,
 When Æolus lets the Scirocco loose.
 Already my slow pace had carried me, 22
 So far within the ancient grove that I
 Could see no longer where I entered in.
 And lo ! a streamlet checked my forward path, 25
 Which with its tiny waves towards the left
 The herbage bent, that grows out from the bank.

- All waters, that the purest are on earth, 28
 Would seem some mixture in themselves to hold,
 Compared to this, which in it nought conceals ;
 Browner although than brown it runs its way 31
 'Neath the perpetual shade, which never there
 Allows or sun or moon to penetrate.
 My feet I stayed, and with mine eyes I passed 34
 Beyond the brook in admiration of
 The vast variety of fresh blown sprays ;
 And there appeared to me (as when appears 37
 Something quite suddenly, that doth displace
 In wonderment our every other thought)
 A solitary damsel, who her way 40
 Pursued with song, selecting flower on flower,
 Wherewith her path was painted all along.
 " Ah ! Lady fair, who in the beams of love 43
 Art warmed, if I may trust the semblances,
 That are the wonted tell-tales of the heart,
 Be it thy will more forward to advance," 46
 I said to her, " towards the river's edge,
 So far, that I may hear what thou dost sing.
 To me thou dost recall, where, and how fair, 49
 Was Proserpine, what time the mother lost
 The child, and child let fall her primrose wreath."
 As in the dance a Lady turns with feet 52
 Pressed to the ground, and close together held,
 And one foot scarce before the other sets,
 So o'er the scarlet and the yellow flowers 55
 She turned to me with grace none other than
 A maid's, who downward droops her modest eyes ;
 And my petition met to heart's content, 58
 Drawing thus near me that her dulcet notes
 And words reached me with meaning full expressed.
 Arrived already where the grasses are 61
 Bathed by the rippling of the beauteous stream,
 She granted me the boon of upraised eyes.
 I do not think such radiance beamèd forth 64

Beneath the lids of Venus, when her son
 Her bosom pierced with inadvertent shaft,
 Erect upon the farther bank, she smiled, 67
 As with her hands she culled yet brighter blooms,
 Which on that lofty land spring up unsown.
 Three paces 'tween us did the river set ; 70
 But Hellespont, where Xerxes crossed, (a curb
 E'en still on all the pride of men,) was ne'er
 So hateful to Leander for the tide 73
 That between Sestos and Abydos rolls,
 As was this stream that opened not to me.
 "New comers are ye, and perchance because 76
 I smile," 'gan she, "in this spot, chosen first
 To be the nest for all the human race,
 Ye in astonishment remain perplexed ; 79
 But *Delectasti* in the Psalm may give
 Light, that shall clear the mists from off your minds ;
 And thou, who foremost art, and me didst pray, 82
 Say if aught else thou'dst hear ; ready I come
 For all you ask, as far as may suffice."
 "This stream," I said, "and rustling of the grove 85
 Impugn within me a new faith in what
 I heard declared, which these things contravene "
 Then she : "Thee will I tell what the cause is, 88
 Whence this proceeds, whereat thou art amazed,
 And so dispel the mist in which thou 'rt caught.
 The Supreme Good, whom Self alone contents, 91
 Made mankind good for good, and gave this place
 To him as earnest of eternal peace.
 By man's default he tarried here short while, 94
 By his default to tears and sweat of toil
 His honest laugh and happy mirth were changed.
 Now that the perturbations caused below 97
 By vapours, breathed from water and the earth,
 Which, far as may be, follow upon heat,
 Might never here have been adverse to man, 100
 This mountain top soared up to Heaven thus high,

From them set free at point where thus enclosed.
 And now, because in circle everywhere 103
 Air moves obedient to the first impulse,
 Unless its circuit be at some point checked,
 In this high region, which is disengaged 106
 In living ether, such an impulse strikes,
 And makes the forest, densely set, resound ;
 The plant thus smitten hath an innate strength, 109
 That with its virtue impregnates the air,
 Which as it whirls its course, diffuseth this :
 And then your earth according as 'tis found 112
 In self and climate fit, conceives and bears
 Its diverse trees of properties diverse.
 No wonder should it then appear down there, 115
 If this be understood, when e'er some tree
 Without apparent seed should germinate.
 And thou must know, this holy plain, where thou 118
 Dost stand, is full of seed of every kind,
 And contains fruit, that yonder is not plucked.
 The water that thou seest springs not from vein, 121
 That vapours may recruit, condensed by cold,
 Like stream that swells and sinks as though it breathed ;
 But issues from a fount unchangeable 124
 And sure, which by God's Will as much receives
 As it pours forth, opening in double stream.
 On this side it comes down with virtue such 127
 As takes away the memory of sin,
 On that restores remembrance of good deeds,
 'Tis Lethe here, but on the other side 130
 Eunoë called ; yet works this virtue not
 Save by a draught taken in turn from each ;
 All other flavours this, the last, transcends. 133
 And although now well satisfied may be
 Thy thirst, so that I need no more unfold,
 Of grace I still add a corollary, 136
 Nor deem I that my words less prized will be
 By thee, if what I promised they exceed.

- The ancient poets, who ere while did sing
The golden age and its felicity,
Dreame on Parnassus haply of this place. 139
- Here was the human stock in innocence, 142
And here perpetual spring, and every fruit ;
This stream the nectar, whereof each doth tell.”
- I turned me full round to my poets then 145
Behind, and by their smile discerned that they
The final sentence well had understood.
- Then to the fair Ladye mine eyes returned. 148

CANTO XXIX.

The Earthly Paradise—The Banks of Lethe.
The Mystic Procession of the Church Triumphant.

THE Lady, as one rapt in love, sang on
 Continuous with the close of her own words,
Beati, quorum tecta, sunt peccata.

And life the nymphs that in seclusion roamed 4
 Through woodland shades, desiring one to fly,
 And one to see the brightness of the sun,
 So moved she up the stream, making her way, 7
 Along the bank, myself in line with her,
 With like steps waiting on her little steps.
 A hundred counted not her steps and mine, 10
 When either bank made equally a curve,
 In fashion such that now I faced the East,
 Nor yet indeed had we so far advanced, 13
 When fully round to me the Lady turned,
 And said: "My Brother, look, and listen well."
 And lo! a sudden brightness sped across 16
 On every side through the broad forest depth,
 Such that I doubted an 'twere lightning flash.
 Yet since the lightning stays but as it comes, 19
 And this abiding more intensely glowed,
 I said in thought within, "What thing is this?"
 And a sweet melody diffused itself 22
 Through the illumined air; whence righteous zeal
 Made me reproach the hardihood of Eve,
 Who, heaven and earth obedient still, herself 25
 A woman only, she just newly formed,
 Brooked no delay 'neath veil of any kind,
 Under the which had she devoutly stayed, 28
 All these ineffable delights had I

Enjoyed at first, and ages afterward.
 While I was moving on mid such first fruits 31
 Of th' everlasting bliss, lost in suspense,
 And eager for still greater joys to come,
 In front of us, like an enkindled fire 34
 Became the air beneath the verdant boughs,
 And the sweet sounds now reached us as a chant.
 Ye Virgins sacrosanct, if ever fasts, 37
 Or cold, or vigils I have borne for you,
 Cause is there spurring me to crave reward.
 Meet 'tis that Helicon flow now for me, 40
 And that Urania aid me with her choir
 To put in verse things e'en for thought too hard.
 Farther a little the wide interval 43
 'Tween them and us a false presentment gave,
 As though were coming seven trees all of gold;
 But when I had so nearly reached them that 46
 The vague similitude, that cheats the sense,
 Lost not in distance its specific form,
 The virtue, which to reason fits the word, 49
 Learned them to be the candlesticks they were,
 And in the voices heard *Hosanna* sung,
 Bravely this furniture sent up a flame 52
 Brighter by far than moon in the serene
 Of midnight in the mid course of her month.
 Filled with amazement backward did I turn 55
 To good Virgilius, who replied to me
 With look o'er-borne by wonderment no less.
 I raised mine eyes again to those tall forms, 58
 Which toward us moved in measured step so slow,
 That newly wedded brides had passed them by.
 The Lady chid me, "Why this eagerness 61
 Of love towards the living lamps alone,
 Without a look to what comes on behind?"
 People I then saw pressing close to them 64
 As to their marshalls, clad in garments white,
 So glistening that this world ne'er saw the like;

Resplendent shone the water on the left, 67
 And back to me reflected my left side,
 As in a glass, when into it I looked.
 Taking upon my bank a station, where 70
 Only the stream between us intervened,
 For better view I halted there my steps ;
 And in advance I saw the flambeau come, 73
 Leaving the air behind with colour decked,
 In semblance like to lines from painter's brush,
 So that o'erhead the atmosphere was streaked 76
 With all the hues, in seven stripes traced, whereof
 The Sun his bow, Delia her girdle makes.
 These streamers to the rear reached farther back 79
 Than could mine eyes, and so far as I judged,
 Betwixt the outermost ten paces ran.
 Beneath so fair a sky, as I describe, 82
 Came four-and-twenty elders, two and two,
 All wearing coronets of fleur de lys ;
 And sang they all ; " Among the daughters born 85
 Of Adam, blest art thou, and blessèd shall
 To all eternity thy beauties be."
 And when the flowers, and all the fresh green grass 88
 In front of me upon the further bank
 Were by this band of the elect left clear,
 As star in heaven follows upon star, 91
 Four living creatures after them came next,
 Crowned one and all with chaplets of green leaves.
 With six wings each of them was featherèd ; 94
 The plumes were full of eyes, and such had been
 The eyes of Argus, had they been alive.
 Reader, to tell their forms no further rhymes 97
 I spend, for other outlay me constrains
 So vast, that more I may not here disburse,
 But read Ezekiel, who describeth how 100
 He them beheld forth from the North arrive,
 In whirlwind, clouds, and flame of fire enwreathed,
 And as thou'lt find it in his pages writ, 103

Such were they here, save as concerns their wings
 John is with me, from him dissentient.

Within this group of four the space contained 106
 A car triumphal, borne upon two wheels,
 Which came along yoked to a Gryphon's neck.

Two wings he bore aloft, and between them 109
 Rose the mid band, and on each side the three,
 So of their sequence thus no breach he made.

Upmounted they beyond the range of sight ; 112
 As far as it was bird, the wings were gold,
 The rest was white and with vermilion striped.

Never in Rome did chariot as proud 115
 An Africanus or Augustus greet:
 Yea the Sun's car were poor compared to this !—

The car, which driven from its course was burned 118
 At supplication of a pious world,
 While Jove in hidden council still was just.

Three Ladies circled at the wheel on right 121
 In measure of a dance, the first so red
 That scarce had she been visible in fire ;

The next did seem as though both flesh and bone 124
 Had of pure emerald been fashionèd ;
 The third appeared like newly fallen snow.

Now seemed the Dame in white to lead the group, 127
 And then the crimson-clad, and by her note
 The others took the step, rapid or slow ;

At the left wheel did four hold festival, 130
 Arrayed in purple, following the beat
 Of one, who in her forehead had three eyes.

In order close upon the group just sketched, 133
 I saw two ancients in their garb unlike,
 But of like mien, each dignified and calm.

The one was plainly a disciple of 136
 Hippocrates, the chief, whom nature made
 To serve the beings that she holds most dear.

The other showed the contrary intent, 139
 Girt with a brightly gleaming sword and sharp,

Such as across the stream filled me with fear.
Next saw I four of meek exterior ; 142
And behind all, an old man by himself,
Walking asleep, but with expressive face.
Like the first company these seven too 145
Were habited ; but of the lily's bloom
No chaplets on the head a garden made,
But rather of the rose, and such red flowers. 148
Seen at a little distance one had sworn
That 'bove the brow all was aglow with fire.
And when the car over against me stood, 151
Thunder was heard ; and for that stately throng
Further advance seemed to be dis-allowed,
As with the vanguard ensigns they stood still. 154

CANTO XXX.

*The Earthly Paradise—Apparition of Beatrice—
Disappearance of Virgil—Beatrice's reproof of Dante.*

WHEN the first Heaven's Septentrion, which ne'er
 Hath known or rise or setting in its course,
 Nor veil of other cloud than mists of sin,
 And there was making everyone alive 4
 To call of duty, as the Wain below
 Guides into port whoever turns the helm,
 Stood firmly fixed, those ministers of truth, 7
 Which 'twixt it and the Gryphon first advanced,
 Turned to the Car, as to their source of peace.
 And one of them, as if by Heaven sent down, 10
 Preceded thrice in chant, that all the rest
 Took up, "*Veni sponsa de Libano.*"
 As at the last great trump the blest will each 13
 Rise quickly from their graves, with voice once more
 Reclodded in flesh, in Alleluias heard,
 E'en so above the heavenly chariot there, 16
Ad vocem tanti senis, hundreds rose,
 Servants and heralds of eternal life,
 All shouting "*Benedictus qui venis ;*" 19
 And, flinging flowers aloft and all around,
Manibus o date lilia plenis.
 Ere now I've seen at dawning of the day 22
 The Orient all bedight with roseate hues,
 The rest of heaven adorned in fair serene ;
 And the sun's face o'er shadowed at his birth, 25
 So that attempered by a veiling mist, -
 The eye long time its brightness could endure ;
 E'en so, embosomed in a cloud of flowers, 28

Which from the hands angelical went up,
 And downward fell within and all around,
 With olive wreath upon a white veil laid, 31
 Appeared a Lady 'neath a mantle green,
 Clothed in the colour of a living flame.
 My spirit that already had been left 34
 Through length of years so many, nor had felt
 Crushed in her presence, overwhelm'd with awe,
 Without the knowledge that the eye conveys, 37
 By secret virtue from herself diffused,
 Felt now the mighty power of bygone love.
 Soon as the influence sublime upon 40
 My vision fell, which me had pierced of yore,
 Ere I had passed the term of boyhood's age,
 I turned me to the left with such regard, 43
 As when the infant to its mother runs,
 If terrified, or if in pain he be,
 To say to Virgil: "Not a drachma e'en 46
 Is left of blood, that thrills not now in me;
 I recognize the sparks of th' ancient fire."
 But Virgil had left us, us all bereft 49
 Of him, of Virgil, sweetest father mine,
 Virgil, to whom my soul's health I gave up;
 Nor all that once our ancient mother lost, 52
 Could so avail the cheeks erst cleansed in dew,
 That they should not be soiled again with tears.
 "Dante, because Virgilius goes away, 55
 Weep not as yet, I say again, not yet,
 For weep thou must, but by another sword."
 As admiral, who upon poop and prow 58
 Comes to inspect the men that serve aboard
 His other ships, and cheers them to brave deeds,
 When at the sound of my own name I turned 61
 Which of necessity finds record here,
 Above the chariot rail upon the left,
 I saw the Lady, who at first appeared 64
 Veiled in the welcome of the angels' joy,

Direct her eyes toward me across the stream.
 Albeit the veil, which from her head flowed down 67
 And was encircled with Minerva's wreath,
 Allowed her not to be entirely seen,
 In regal state, with bearing still reserved, 70
 Continued she, as one who speaks indeed,
 But whose most burning words are yet restrained,
 "Look on us well! yes—We are Beatrice; 73
 How didst thou deign this mountain to ascend?
 Didst thou not know that man is happy here?"
 Mine eyes I drooped to the clear stream, but at 76
 The sight of self I turned them to the grass,
 So deep the shame that weighed upon my brow:
 So to her son, the mother seems but hard, 79
 As she to me, for some what bitter is
 The flavour which a stern compassion hath. 82
 Silent was she: but prompt the Angels' chant
 Began: "*Speravi in te Domine,*"
 Though beyond "*Pedes meos*" they went not.
 Just as the snow amidst the living trunks 85
 Upon the spine of Italy congeals,
 Stiffened in blast of the Sclavonian winds,
 And then dissolving trickles through itself, 88
 Soon as the land, that knows no shadow, breathes,
 So that it seems fire that a taper melts;
 Such was myself, without or tear or sigh, 91
 Until I caught the song of those, whose notes
 Follow the notes of the eternal spheres.
 But when in their sweet harmony I felt 94
 Their sympathy with me, more than if they
 Had said: "Lady, wherefore so stern to him?"
 The ice, which round my heart was tightly bound, 97
 Water and breath became, and through my mouth
 And eyes rushed from my breast in agony.
 Still on the same side of the car unmoved 100
 She stood, and to those holy essences
 Turned thereupon with words to this effect.

- " Ye through the eternal day your vigil keep, 103
 So that from you nor night nor sleep doth steal
 A single step that time makes in its course ;
 Therefore I answer make with greater care. 106
 That he who yonder weeps may hear it well,
 And thus his sin and grief may equal be.
 Not by the work of the great wheels alone, 109
 Which every seed direct to a fixed end
 According to the stars that wait on it,
 But by the bounty of celestial grace, 112
 Which comes in showers down from clouds so high
 Our vision may not unto them approach,
 This man was such in days of his young life 115
 Potentially, that all good habits might
 In him have made an admirable proof.
 But so much more unkindly and more rank 118
 Becomes the land with bad seed, and untilled,
 As stronger is the vigour of its soil.
 Him for a while my countenance sustained ; 121
 Showing to him the light of girlish eyes,
 I led him with me towards the goal of right.
 But soon as to the threshold I had come 124
 Of second age, and had exchanged my life,
 Me he forsook, and gave himself elsewhere.
 From flesh to spirit when I mounted up, 127
 Beauty and virtue waxing more in me,
 To him was I less dear, and pleased him less ;
 He turned his steps to ways that were not true ; 130
 False images of good did he pursue,
 Which ne'er repay the promises they make.
 Availed it nought by prayer to win for him 133
 Good thoughts, inspired in dream and other ways,
 With which to call him back ; so little he
 Gave heed, and fell so low, all arguments 136
 Proved short of what his soul's health needed still,
 Except the vision of the lost below.
 For this I visited the gate of death, 139

And to the Guide, who hither led him up,
My prayers with tears abundant were addressed.
Broken would be the high decree of God, 142
Should Lethe now be passed, and her sweet food
Be tasted, without forfeit duly paid
Of Penance, such as gusheth forth in tears." 145

CANTO XXXI.

*The Earthly Paradise—Dantè's Confession and his Plunge
in Lethe—Beatrice's Handmaidens—Beatrice Unveiled—*

“O THOU, on yon side of the sacred stream,”
 Turning to me the point of her address,
 Of which me seemed the side blow was too sharp,
 In sequel she began without delay, 4
 “Say, say, if this be true; to charges such
 Thine own confession needs must be conjoined.”
 Confounded so were all my faculties, 7
 Voice made an effort, and was spent, ere it
 By its own organs could disclosed be.
 Awhile she paused; then said; “What thinkest thou? 10
 Reply to me, for sad remembrances
 The water hath not yet effaced from thee.”
 Fear and confusion mingling both at once 13
 Forced from between my lips so faint a “yes,”
 ’Twas for the eye to read its purport right.
 As cross-bow snaps with string and bow alike, 16
 When bolt with too great tension is discharged,
 And with less force the arrow hits the mark;
 So ’neath that grievous load myself broke down, 19
 Both tears and sighs together bursting forth,
 While the voice faltered, as it strove to pass.
 Then she: “Amidst the yearnings I inspired, 22
 Which led thee to affection for that Good,
 Beyond which there is nothing to desire,
 What cross-cut trenches, or what chains didst thou 25
 Encounter, that thou should’st have thus cast off
 The hope to make thy onward journey good?
 And what allurement or advantages 28

In other objects were there so displayed,
 That thou midst them should loiter up and down?"
 And when I'd drawn a deep and bitter sigh, 31
 Voice scarcely had I left to answer with,
 As painfully my lips did utter it.
 With tears I said: "Things of the present life 34
 By their false pleasure turned my steps aside.
 Soon as thy face was hidden from my sight."
 And she: "Hadst thou been silent, or denied 37
 What thou hast now confessed, thy full offence
 Had still been clear: by such a Judge 'tis known.
 But when from man's own mouth bursts forth of sin 40
 Self accusation, in this court of ours,
 Against the edge the grinder's wheel turns back.
 Yet that still nobler shame thou bear away 43
 From this thine error, and another time
 Hearing the Sirens, thou may braver be,
 Throw off this seed of weeping, and give ear: 46
 So wilt thou learn how quite the other way
 My buried body should have guided thee.
 Nature or art did ne'er to thee present 49
 Delight so great as those fair limbs, wherein
 I was enclosed, now scattered in the dust.
 And if this chief delight did fail thee thus, 52
 When I was dead, what mortal thing remained,
 That should have thee beguiled to love of it?
 Rightly should'st thou, when first by arrow struck 55
 Of things fallacious, have thyself upraised
 In chace of me, who was no longer such.
 Thou shouldest not have earthward dropt thy wing, 58
 To wait more shots, be it from foolish girl,
 Or other vain thing of as brief a joy.
 Two or three times a fledgling may abide; 61
 But in the sight of the full feather'd bird
 In vain the net is spread, or arrow shot."
 As little boys, ashamed and speechless, all 64
 With eyes abashed, stand listening to reproof,

Owning themselves at fault and penitent,
 So did I stand, and she continued thus : 67
 " Since if to hear be pain, lift up thy beard,
 And thou wilt find 'tis greater pain to see."
 With less resistance may uprooted be 70
 A sturdy oak, whether by our North wind,
 Or that which bloweth from Iarba's land,
 Than I at her command raised up my chin : 73
 And since in saying beard she meant the face,
 I felt the full sting of her argument.
 And as my countenance exposed itself, 76
 Mine eye perceived creation's first born Sons
 Were now at rest, and scattered flowers no more ;
 And little re-assured as yet, mine eyes 79
 Saw Beatrice turned towards the Beast, wherein
 Two natures in One only Person join.
 Beneath her veil, and 'cross the streamlet's breadth, 82
 She seemed to me her old self to surpass,
 As it surpassed all others, when with us.
 The nettle of repentance stung me so, 85
 That 'bove all else, whate'er by love of it
 Had most perverted me, was most my hate.
 Compunction gnawed so deeply in my heart, 88
 That overcome, I sank. What then I did,
 She knows, who wrought in me the cause of it.
 But when the heart restored my outward sense, 91
 The Lady, whom at first I'd found alone,
 I saw bend over me, saying: " Hold fast."
 She through the stream up to my neck had drawn 94
 Me on, and, drawing me behind her, moved
 Over the wave, swift as the shuttle flies.
 As nearer to the blessed shore I came, 97
 " *Asperges me,*" I heard in notes so sweet,
 That memory fails, still more the power to write.
 The winsome Lady opened then her arms, 100
 Clasped them around my head, and plunged it down,
 So that needs must I of the water drink :

- She drew me forth, presenting me thus bathed 103
 To the fair circle of the four that danced,
 Who each around me threw her arm in turn.
- "Here we are nymphs; in heaven above are stars; 106
 Ere Beatrice into the world went down,
 We as handmaidens were appointed her.
- We'll lead thee to her eyes; but for the light 109
 And gladness therein, the yonder Three,
 Who more profoundly gaze, will quicken thine."
- In song they thus began, and led me then 112
 Up with themselves unto the Gryphon's breast,
 Where Beatrice was standing, turned towards us.
- "Spare not," they said, "to satisfy thy gaze; 115
 We've placed thee here, fronting the emeralds,
 Whence Love of old 'gainst thee shot forth his darts."
- A thousand longings, hotter far than flame, 118
 Fastened mine eyes on her's, which beamed with light,
 Fixed on the Gryphon still in steadfast gaze.
- As on a mirror doth the sun, e'en so 121
 The two-fold Beast flashed in her eyes His rays,
 In acts alternate of His either form.
- Think, Reader, how within I wondered then, 124
 Seeing the Thing Itself in calm repose,
 Yet in Its image ever changing form;
- The while with joy and with amazement filled, 127
 My spirit feasted on that Mystic Food,
 Which as it satisfies, provokes desire.
- In stately movement came the other Three, 130
 Themselves approving of the highest grade,
 Dancing to measure of their angel song.
- "Turn, Beatrice, O turn thy saintly eyes 133
 To thine own liegeman," such their burden was,
 "Who to see thee, hath trod so many a step.
- Of Grace grant us this grace, that thou unveil 136
 To him thy mouth, that so he may behold
 The second beauty that thou dost conceal."
- O Splendour of Eternal, Living Light, 139

Who is there that beneath Parnassus' shade
Hath pallid grown, or of its waters drunk,
That would not find his mind obscured in cloud, 142
Striving to show thee, as thou didst appear,
Where Heaven around thee weaves its harmonies,
As in clear air thou didst thyself reveal ? 145

CANTO XXXII.

*The Earthly Paradise—The Vicissitudes of the Sacred Car—
 Symbolical Tree—The Eagle—The Fox—The Dragon—
 The Monstrous Transformation of the Car—
 The Harlot and the Giant.*

SO close mine eyes were fixed and rivetted,
 Greedy to slake the thirst of ten long years,
 That all my other senses were extinct ;
 And walls on either side of them rose up 4
 Of sheer indifference ; so did the saintly smile
 With the old net draw them to it alone ;
 When forcibly my gaze was turned aside 7
 Towards my left hand by the god-like Three,
 Hearing from all the one cry, " Too intent."
 And that condition which affects the sight 10
 Of eyes just dazzled by the solar rays,
 Left me of vision for the nonce bereft.
 But when for lesser objects sight returned, 13
 Lesser I say, as measured by the vast
 Vision of light from which perforce I'd turned,
 I saw the glorious army had wheel'd round 16
 Upon the right, and thus returning, had
 The sun and seven flames in face of it.
 As a battalion underneath its shields 19
 Turns in retreat, and by its standard wheels
 Before the whole as yet has changed its front,
 So the militia of the heavenly King, 22
 Which led the van, had all in file passed by,
 Before the pole had swung the chariot round.
 Then to the wheels the Ladies turned again, 25
 And His blest burthen on the Gryphon bore,
 So that however not a feather stirred.

- The Lady fair, who drew me through the ford, 28
 And I and Statius followed at the wheel,
 Which in its orbit formed the lesser curve.
- Through the tall grove we passed, left void by sin 31
 Of her who to the serpent lent her ear,
 Marching in measure to an angel strain.
- Perhaps in three flights so much ground had ta'en 34
 An arrow from the bowstring sped, as we
 Had traversed now, when Beatrice stepped down.
- "Adam," I heard whisper'd by all around ; 37
 A tree they compassed then, entirely stripped
 Of leaves and blossom on its ev'ry bough.
- Its crowning branches, which the wider spread, 40
 As higher it grew, had to the Indian seemed
 A marvel in their height amid his groves.
- "Blest art Thou, Gryphon, who dost not with beak 43
 Pluck from this tree, what to the taste is sweet,
 Since by it after is the belly wrung."
- So cried the rest, circling the sturdy tree ; 46
 And, said the Being of two natures formed :
 " Thus is preserved the seed of Righteousness."
- And turning to the pole which he had drawn, 49
 To foot he dragged it of the widowed stem,
 And to its parent stock he left it bound.
- As with our trees, when downward here below 52
 The great light pours its flood, mingling with that
 Which beams abroad behind the heavenly fish,
- The buds swell out, and then once more is each 55
 In its own tint renewed, ere yet the sun
 Hath yoked his coursers 'neath another star ;
- So less than rose, and more than violet, 58
 Disclosing its own hue, the tree grew young.
 Which ere while showed its boughs so desolate.
- Ne'er had I heard, on earth it is not sung, 61
 The hymn then chanted by that company,
 Nor could I bear its music to the end.
- Could I paint how at story of Syrinx 64

The unrelenting eyes dropped off to sleep,
 Those eyes which longer vigil cost so dear,
 Like painter, who from living model paints 67
 I would portray how then I fell asleep :
 Who would do this, must drowsiness depict.
 So I pass on to when I woke again, 70
 And say, a splendour rent the veil of sleep,
 And a loud call : " Arise, what doest thou ?"
 As to behold the Appletree in bloom, 73
 The fruit whereof fills Angels with desire,
 And spreads in Heaven perpetual bridal feasts,
 Peter and John and James were led apart, 76
 And overpowered at the Word awoke,
 By which profounder slumbers have been broke,
 And saw their company diminished 79
 As well by Moses as Elias too
 And all the raiment of the Master changed :
 So I revived, and standing over me 82
 Beheld the kindly spirit, who had led
 My steps at first along the river side.
 " Where's Beatrice ? " I said in anxious doubt : 85
 And she : " Behold her 'neath the foliage
 But now fresh opened, seated on the root.
 See the companions that encircle her, 88
 The others mounting in the Gryphon's train
 With sweeter song, of import more profound."
 And if her speech went on to greater length, 91
 I cannot tell, for now before mine eyes
 Was she, who closed perception of all else.
 Alone she sat upon the very earth, 94
 As if left there, the Guardian of the Car,
 Which I had seen the bifold being bind.
 Environment around her of themselves 97
 The seven nymphs formed, all with those lamps in hand,
 Which from the blasts of North or South are safe.
 " Here wilt thou be short while a forester, 100
 And shalt with me for aye be citizen

In that Rome where the Christ a Roman is.
 Wherefore for that world's weal, which lives so ill, 103
 Fix on the Car thine eyes, and what thou seest,
 Returning thither, fail not to write down."
 Thus Beatrice : and I who at the feet 106
 Of her commands in full devotion knelt,
 Set mind and eyes alike where she enjoined.
 Never descended in a flash so swift 109
 From out thick cloud the fire, when streams the rain
 Down from that sphere which far away revolves,
 As I beheld the bird of Jove swoop down 112
 Athwart the tree, tearing the very bark,
 Not its mere buds alone, and tender leaves ;
 And with full force it dashed upon the Car, 115
 That reeled beneath it like a storm-tossed ship,
 Drifted by waves to starboard, then to port.
 And next into the cradle of the Car 118
 Triumphal, a she fox I saw creep in,
 Which seemed from good food to have fasted long.
 But it upbraiding for its hideous sins, 121
 My Lady turned it to as swift a flight
 As its bare bones, devoid of flesh, allowed.
 And once again from point whence first she came, 124
 I saw the eagle drop into the Car,
 And leave it with her feathers overstrewn.
 And then, as wrung from heart with sorrow pierced, 127
 A voice from heaven came forth, and thus it spake :
 " Ah, little boat how evil is thy freight ! "
 The earth then seemed to me to ope her mouth 130
 'Twixt the two wheels, and forth a dragon came,
 Which upward through the Car did thrust its tail ;
 And like a wasp, that draweth back its sting, 133
 Drawing again its baleful tail, dragg'd out
 Part of the floor, and went away in glee.
 That which remained, as with its blades of grass 136
 The living earth, with plumage, first bestowed,
 Perchance, for purposes benign and pure,

- Covered itself again, and covered too 139
Were either wheel and pole so quickly, that
A sigh doth longer keep the lips apart.
The holy structure now transformèd thus 142
Burst out with heads at all its several points,
Three 'bove the pole, and at each corner one ;
The first were horned as oxen, but the four 145
Bore on the forehead each a single horn :
Like prodigy was never seen before.
Firm as a don-jon tower on mountain top, 148
Seated upon it, there appeared to me
A shameless whore, who ready glances cast
Around ; and, as with mind to keep her his, 151
I saw a giant at her side erect,
And ever and anon the two did kiss.
But because she her lustful, wanton eye 154
Turned upon me, that savage paramour
Lashed her with scourge from head down to the feet.
Then filled with jealousy, and fierce with rage, 157
The monster he unloosed, and dragged it off
Far in the wood, which of itself sufficed
To hide the harlot and the strange new beast. 160

CANTO XXXIII.

*The Earthly Paradise—Beatrice's Prophecy—The Five
Thousand, Two, and Five—Dante's final Cleansing—
Eunoë.*

DEUS *venerunt gentes* ; thus in turn
 The Ladies three, and then the four began
 With mingling tears sweet Psalmody to sing ;
 And in compassion Beatrice with sighs 4
 Listened with aspect such, that hardly more
 Was Mary changed, when by the Cross she stood.
 But when to her the other maidens gave 7
 Place for her words, then rising to her feet,
 She answer made with count'nance flushed like fire :
 “ *Modicum et non videbitis me* ; 10
Et iterum, my sisters well beloved,
Modicum et vos videbitis me.”
 All seven then she placed in front of her ; 13
 And after her, by sign alone, she drew
 Myself, the Lady, and the sage who stayed.
 So went she on, and not I think had yet 16
 Her tenth step forward on the ground been set,
 When with her eyes upon my eyes she smote ;
 And with a tranquil look : “ More quickly come,” 19
 She said to me, “ so much, that if I speak
 With thee, thou may'st for listening be well placed.”
 Soon as I joined her, as in duty bound, 22
 She said to me : “ Why, Brother, carest thou not
 To question me, now walking by my side ? ”
 As 'tis with them, who reverent in excess 25
 In presence of superiors speak, so that
 Ne'er to the teeth the living voice is dragg'd,
 Thus it befell me ; for in faltering tones, 28

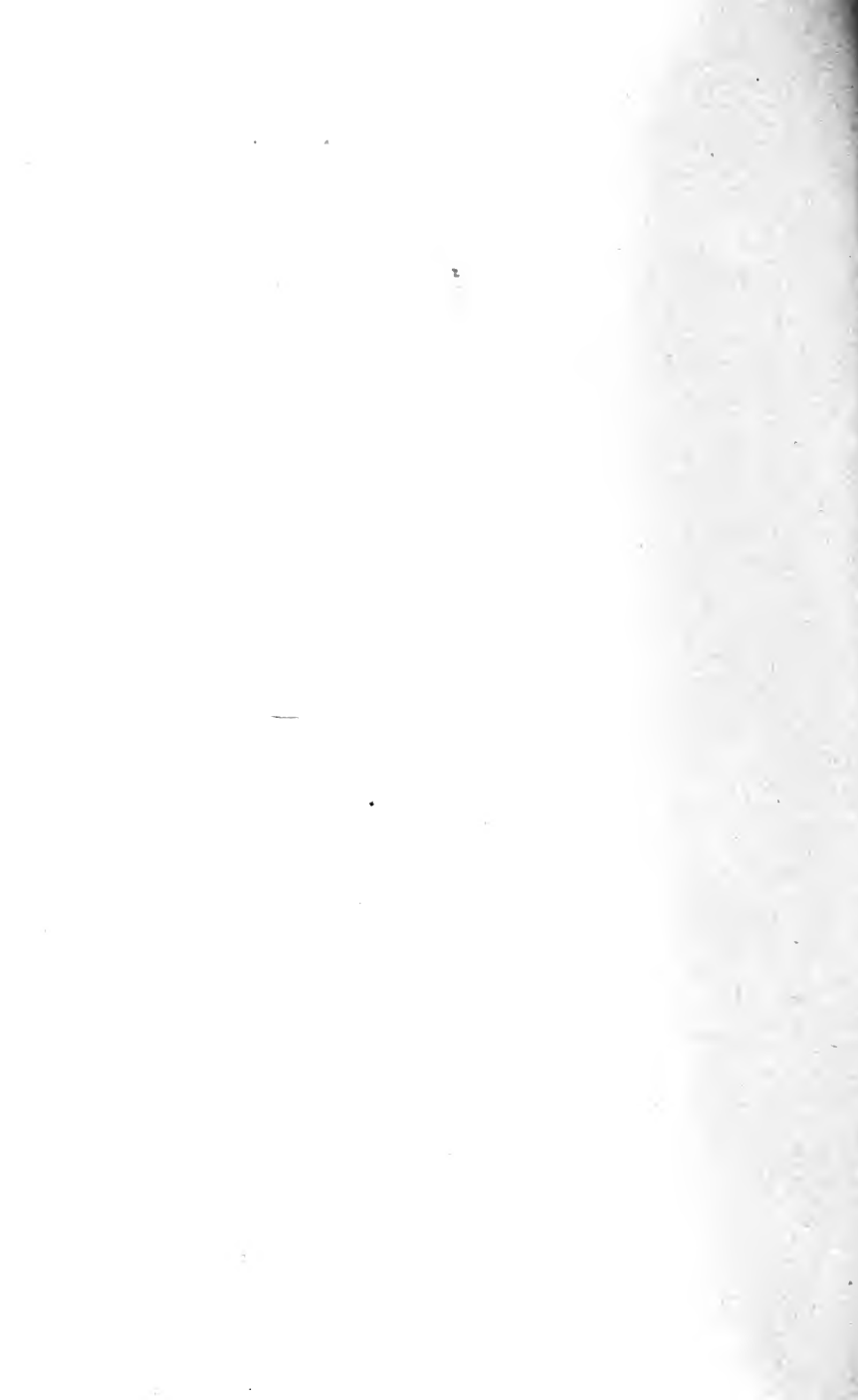
"My Lady," I began, "my every need
 You know, and what is good for it withal."
 Then she to me: "From fear and from all shame 31
 My will is now thou disembarras thee,
 So that thou speak no more as one who dreams.
 Know that the vessel, which the serpent broke, 34
 Was and is not; but let the guilty one
 Know well, God's vengeance by no sops is scared.
 Not for all time without an heir will be 37
 Th' eagle that left his feathers in the Car,
 Whence it a monster, then a prey became.
 For I see surely, and therefore announce, 40
 Stars even now are near, which bring to us
 A time safe from assault and every check,
 In which a Five Hundred, a Ten and Five 43
 Sent forth by God, shall slay th' adult'ress and
 The giant too, the partner of her guilt.
 And should perchance my message, thus obscure 46
 As Themis and the Sphinx, persuade thee less,
 Since in their style it clouds intelligence;
 Events will soon the son of Laius prove, 49
 Who shall this hard enigma well explain,
 Without the loss of cattle or of crops.
 Note all this well, and as from me these words 52
 Proceed, so teach them unto those that live
 The life which only is a race to death;
 And bear in mind, when thou dost write them down, 55
 That thou hide nought that in the tree thou'st seen,
 Which twice hath now in this place been despoiled.
 Whoe'er spoils that, or doth those branches strip, 58
 By deed of blasphemy outrageth God,
 Who made it holy for His only use.
 For biting it in pain and long desire 61
 Five thousand years and more the first man yearned
 For Him, who punished on Himself that bite.
 Thine observation sleeps, if it note not, 64
 That for rare purpose it grows very high,

And that its summit too spreads widely out,
 And if vain thoughts had not around thy mind 67
 Been to it as the Elsa spring, and their delights
 What to the mulberry was Pyramus,
 By circumstances such alone wouldst thou 70
 Have seen God's Justice morally display'd.
 When on the tree He laid His interdict.
 But as I see thee in intelligence 73
 Hardened to stone, and with its colour stained,
 So that my speech but blinds thee by its light.
 I will that, if unwritten, in outline, 76
 Thou carry it away within thee stored,
 As with palm leaves the pilgrim binds his staff."
 And I, "Just as the wax, with signet stamped, 79
 Doth never change the form impressed on it,
 So likewise now by you my brain is stamped.
 But why thus far above my vision's range 82
 Should words longed for by me so pitch their flight,
 That more I lose, as more I strive to grasp?"
 "That thou may'st recognize," she said, "the school 85
 Which thou hast followed, and its doctrine see,
 How to my teaching it can ne'er attain;
 And see how from the path divine your road 88
 Is as far distant, as from earth is far
 The highest heaven that swiftly hastens round."
 Whereon I answered: "I remember not 91
 That from you I did e'er estrange myself,
 Nor doth my conscience touch me with remorse."
 "And if thou canst not thine own self recall," 94
 She answered with a smile, "remember now,
 That but to-day thou hast of Lethe drunk.
 And if from smoke a fire may be inferred, 97
 This thy oblivion clearly doth conclude
 Fault in thy will, engaged by something else.
 But henceforth shall my words denuded be, 100
 So far as it shall fittingly suffice
 For thy crude vision to discover them."

Meanwhile with brighter fires and tardier step 103
 The sun was holding his meridian round,
 Which, as 'tis viewed, now here, now there appears,
 When, as an escort halts, who in advance 106
 Precedes a convoy, if he on the track
 Sees aught that's strange, so to a standstill came
 The Ladies seven on verge of a dim shade, 109
 Such as 'neath foliage green and branches black,
 The Alp may cast o'er banks of icy stream.
 In front of them methought, as from one fount, 112
 I saw Euphrates and the Tigris flow,
 And like good friends slow to part company.
 "O Light, O Glory of the human race, 115
 What is this water, which doth here expand
 From one prime source, and from itself divide?"
 To this my prayer in answer came: "Beseech 118
 Matilda to explain." And then replied,
 As one who hastes to clear herself from blame,
 That fair Ladye: "This and much more beside 121
 Hath he by me been told, and sure I am
 That Lethe's water hid not this from him."
 And Beatrice: "Some greater care perchance, 124
 That ofttime robs us of our memory,
 Hath dimmed the vision of his mental eye.
 But yonder see Eunoë flowing down; 127
 There lead him, and as thou art wont to do,
 His half dead powers to their full life recall."
 Like gentle soul that proffers no excuse, 130
 But as its own adopts another's will,
 As soon as this by outward sign is shown,
 So straightway, as she took me by the hand, 133
 Moved the fair Ladye on; and "With him come,"
 She said to Statius with true, woman's grace.
 If, Reader, I had but a broader page 136
 To write on, I would sing to thee in part
 Of the sweet draught, which ne'er had sated me:
 But because now the pages are filled full, 139

Prepared for this my second canticle,
The curb of art lets me no farther go.
Back I returned from that most holy stream, 142
Regenerate in fashion of young trees,
Freshly revived in their new foliage,
Pure, and disposed to mount up to the stars. 145





PARADISO.



PARADISO.

CANTO I.

*The Proem—Opening Invocation—Ascent into the
Sphere of Fire.*

Mode of Ascent—Order of the Universe.

HIS Glory, Who in motion sets all things,
Pervades the Universe; in one place more,
In other less, His Splendour shineth back.
Within that heaven, which of His Light receives 4
The most, I've been, and things beheld, which one
Who thence descends, nor knows nor can relate;
Because approaching to its own Desire, 7
Our understanding plungeth in so deep,
That memory cannot from so far return.
Yet still whatever of that holy realm 10
I could store up as treasure in my mind,
Shall now the matter be of this my song.
Gracious Apollo, for my final task 13
Make me such vessel of thy power, as thou
Dost claim, ere thy loved laurel thou bestow.
Thus far the one peak of Parnassus hath 16
For me sufficed; but now I need them both
To enter the arena that remains.

- Enter my breast, and breathe there now, as erst 19
 Thou breathed'st on the day, when Marsyas
 Thou from the scabbard of his limbs didst draw.
- O Power Divine, if of Thyself thou lend 22
 So much, that but a shadow I may show
 Of that blest realm, which on my brain is stamped,
 Me shalt thou see thine own loved tree approach, 25
 And crown me then with leaves, to which the theme
 And thy own Self may have entitled me.
- At times so rare, O Father, are these culled 28
 For poet's or a Cæsar's triumph day,
 (Fault of men's wills unto their utter shame)
- That from Peneian wreath a new born joy 31
 To Delphic Deity's own joy should spring,
 When e'er for it a man thirsts eagerly.
- A mighty flame follows a little spark : 34
 Perchance when I am gone, in better words
 Prayers may go up that Cirrha shall accept.
- Through divers outlets riseth unto men 37
 The world's great lamp ; but from that one, wherein
 Four circles with three crosses are combined,
 On better course, with more propitious star 40
 Conjoined, it goeth forth, and to its mood
 Adjusts and stamps with seal the wax of earth.
- Such outlet there had made it almost morn, 43
 And almost evening here ; one hemisphere
 Was there all white, and black the other half,
 When Beatrice I saw, turned round towards 46
 The left ; in steadfast gaze upon the sun,
 Thereon did eagle ne'er so fix his eye.
- And as a second ray forth from the first 49
 Is wont to issue, and reboundeth then
 Upward, like pilgrim longing to return,
 Such as her act, which through mine eyes poured in 52
 Upon my phantasy, was mine ; and I
 Fixed on the sun my gaze beyond our wont.
- Yonder is much allowed, allowed not here, 55

Unto our powers, by favour of the place
 Created for the home of all mankind.
 Not long I bore it, yet not so short while, 58
 As not to see it throw off sparks all round,
 Like iron that issues glowing from the fire.
 And suddenly it seemed that day on day 61
 Was superadded, as though He, Who can,
 Had with a second sun adorned the sky.
 With eyes full set upon the Eternal Spheres 64
 Stood Beatrice ; on her alone were fixed
 Mine own, wholly withdrawn from higher range.
 In view of her I inly felt, as did 67
 Glaucus, who tasting of the herb, became
 With th' other Gods co-partner in the sea.
 To be trans-humanized none can in words 70
 Express, so let my instance him content,
 For whom Grace holds th' experience in reserve.
 If of me there were only what Thou didst 73
 Create the last, Thou know'st, O Love, that heaven
 Dost sway, and with Thy Light didst lift me up.
 When now the Sphere, which Thou, Desire of all, 76
 Makest eternal, my attention fixed
 By notes attuned, and measured by Thyself,
 So much of heaven seemed then to be aglow 79
 With the sun's fire, that neither rain nor flood
 E'er formed a lake so vast in its expanse.
 The strange new sound I heard, and the great Light 82
 Kindled desire in me to know their cause,
 Such as before I ne'er had felt so keen.
 Whence she, who saw me as I see myself, 85
 To quiet the disturbance of my soul,
 Open'd her mouth, ere I could mine to ask ;
 And she began : " Thou dost so dull thyself 88
 With false imagining, as not to see
 What thou might'st see, if this thou'd'st shaken off.
 Thou art not upon earth, as thou dost deem ; 91
 Yet lightning flashed forth from its proper home

- Ne'er passed so swift as thy arrival here." 94
 If of first doubts I were divested then
 By the brief words, accented by her smiles,
 A new one held me in a closer net.
- I said : " But now I rested in content 97
 From great amazement ; yet again am lost,
 How through these airy substances I mount."
 Thereon with something of a pitying sigh, 100
 She turned on me her eyes with such a look
 As mother casts on a delirious child ;
 And she began : " All things of every kind 103
 Due order keep among themselves ; this is
 The form which makes the Universe like God.
 Herein the higher natures see th' imprint 106
 Of the Eternal Power, who is the End
 Whereto is made the Law just touched upon.
 In order, such as I describe, incline 109
 All natures, in their various destinies,
 More near or less unto their primal Source ;
 So move they on, to its own haven each, 112
 O'er the great sea of being, each impelled
 By special instinct bearing it along.
 'Tis this that carries fire towards the moon, 115
 This stirs the impulse of the mortal heart,
 This in itself unites and binds the earth.
 Nor creatures outside of intelligence 118
 Alone doth this bow with its arrows reach,
 But those that have intelligence and love.
 The Providence, that doth all this adjust, 121
 Stills with its Light that calm of Heaven away,
 Wherein revolves that which hath swiftest speed.
 And thither now, as our appointed bourne, 124
 The virtue of the string bears us, which guides
 Unto a goal of bliss what it propels.
 True is't, that as the form ofttimes doth not 127
 Accord with the intention of the art,
 Because material to respond is deaf.

- E'en so from this direction may depart
Sometimes the creature, that hath power to swerve,
Impell'd it may be in another way,
(So may be seen downfalling from a cloud
The flash of fire) if the first impetus
Be wrested earthward by a false delight.
Nor shouldst thou wonder more, if well I judge,
At thine ascent, than at the rivulet
From a high hill descending to the plain.
Wonder 'twould be at thee, if now released,
From hindrance, thou had'st settled down below;
As though a living flame could rest on earth."
And Heavenward then she turned her face again.

130

133

136

139

142

- Turned to me joyous as she beauteous was ; 28
 "Lift up to God a thankful heart," she said,
 "Who with the first star hath united us."
 It seemed to me a cloud enveloped us, 31
 Luminous, dense, solidified and smooth,
 As 'twere a diamond smitten by the sun.
 Into itself the everlasting pearl 34
 Received us, e'en as water doth receive
 A ray of light, itself remaining one.
 If I were body then (and here none knows 37
 How one dimension can another hold,
 As must be, if two bodies coalesce,)
 Intense desire should hotter burn in us 40
 That Essence to behold, Wherein is seen
 How our own nature is made one with God.
 What now we hold by Faith, will there be seen 43
 By intuition, 'not by argument,
 As is the first truth that a man believes.
 I in reply : "Lady, as best I can, 46
 To Him I render my devoutest thanks,
 Who hath withdrawn me from the mortal world.
 But tell me what the dusky spots may be 49
 Upon this substance, which down there on earth
 Makes folks repeat their fables about Cain?"
 Somewhat she smiled, and, "If opinion," then 52
 She said, "with mortal men doth err in things
 Their senses cannot, as with key, unlock,
 Surely the shafts of wonderment should not 55
 Wound thee henceforth, when in the track of sense
 Reason, thou seest, wings but a sorry flight.
 But say what of thyself thou think'st hereon." 58
 And I : "The difference we observe up here
 Is caused I think by bodies dense and rare."
 And she : "Surely thou'lt find this faith of thine 61
 Full steeped in error, if thou wisely hear
 The arguments I shall oppose thereto.
 The eighth sphere showeth many lights to you, 64

- Which in their quality and quantity
 May noted be of various semblances.
 If dense and rare alone could this effect, 67
 One virtue only would there be in all,
 Diffused, or more, or less, or equally.
 But diverse virtues need must be the fruits 70
 Of formal principles, and these, save one,
 By argument of thine would be destroyed.
 Again, if rarity were now the cause 73
 We seek of this brown tint, either in parts
 This planet would of matter fail right through ;
 Or like the fat and lean distributed 76
 Through bodies in their turn, so too in this,
 The pages of its book would alternate.
 Were the first true, it would in sun's eclipse 79
 Be manifest by the translucent light,
 As when thrown in on any thin substance.
 This is not so : therefore must we look at 82
 The other case, and should it chance that this
 I quash, false thy conjecture will be proved.
 Be it this rarity reach not right through, 85
 A limit of necessity it hath,
 Where passage by its contrary is barr'd,
 And whence the other's rays would be thrown back, 88
 As is the colour that a glass reflects,
 The which behind it hides a plate of lead.
 Now thou wilt say that darker shows itself 91
 The ray on this spot than appears elsewhere,
 Because reflected there from farther back.
 From this objection, if thou use the test, 94
 Experiment some day will set thee free,
 Familiar source of all your streams of art.
 Three mirrors take, and equidistant two, 97
 From thee remove ; a third thine eye shall catch
 Between the first two placed, but farther off.
 Turning to these, mind that behind thee stands 100
 A lamp, which on the mirrors three may shine,

And reach to thee reflected from them all.
 Although in quantity expandeth not 103
 So wide the distant image, thou wilt see
 That with an equal brightness its rays shine.
 Now as by contact with the warmer beams 106
 What lay beneath denuded is of snow,
 Both as to colour and the previous chill,
 So thy intelligence, left open now, 109
 Will I instruct with such a living light,
 As shall appear to thee like twinkling star.
 Within the heaven of Divine Repose 112
 Revolves a body, in whose virtue lies
 The being of all things that it enfolds.
 The heaven next this, that hath so much to show, 115
 This being shares 'mong essences diverse,
 Distinct from it, but in it all contained ;
 The other spheres, by various differences, 118
 All the distinctions proper to themselves
 Dispose unto their ends and fruitfulness.
 Thus do these organs of the world go on, 121
 As clearly now thou seest from grade to grade,
 And work below with what comes from above.
 Observe me well, how from this point I move 124
 On to the truth thou'dst learn, so that henceforth
 Thou mayst know how to cross the ford alone.
 The motion of these holy spheres and all 127
 Their virtue, as the hammer's art from smith,
 Must by some blessed Motors be inspired ;
 And thus the heaven, which stars so many grace, 130
 The Image grasps of the Deep Mind, which first
 Its motion gave, and thereof forms a seal.
 And as the soul, encasèd in your dust, 133
 Through different members, all with aptitude
 For diverse faculties is self-diffused,
 So That Intelligence likewise unfolds 136
 Its Goodness, multiplied through all the stars,
 Revolving aye on its own Unity.

Virtue diverse in diverse blend compacts	139
The precious body that it vivifies,	
Wherein, like life in you, it is bound up.	
By the glad Nature, whence it is derived,	142
The mingled virtue through the body shines,	
As gladness beameth through the living eye.	
From this proceeds what between light and light	145
May different seem, and not from dense and rare ;	
This is the formal principle that makes	
To its own goodness dark and bright conform.	148

CANTO III.

*The First Heaven of the Moon—Imperfect Vows—A Vision
of Souls in Bliss—Piccarda Donati—Degrees of Happiness—
Empress Costanza.*

THAT Sun, which early fired my heart with love,
 The sweet aspect of beauteous Truth to me
 By proof and refutation had unveiled ;
 And to confess myself corrected now 4
 And well convinced, I lifted up my head,
 As far as for avowal such was meet.
 But there appeared a vision which held me 7
 In scrutiny of it so closely fixed,
 That my confession I remembered not.
 As when through polished and transparent glass, 10
 Or yet through waters gleaming bright and calm,
 But not so deep, their depths are lost to sight,
 The outlines of our features are returned 13
 So faintly, that a pearl on forehead white
 Upon the pupil not more slowly comes ;
 Such saw I many faces prompt to speak ; 16
 Whereby I ran in error counter to
 That which 'twixt man and fountain kindled love.
 At once, soon as I was of them aware, 19
 Deeming them only mirror'd semblances,
 To see whose image they reflected, I
 Turned mine eyes round, saw no one, and again 22
 Turned straightway to the light of my sweet Guide,
 Whose holy eyes glowed warmly as she smiled.
 "Now marvel not why thus I smile on thee," 25
 She said, "in presence of thy childish thought,
 Since still its foot distrusts the solid truth,
 But, as 'tis wont, turns round to emptiness. 28

True substances are these thou lookest on,
 Here relegated for imperfect vows.
 Wherefore speak with them ; listen, and believe ; 31
 The Light of truth, which fills them with content,
 Allows them not from it to turn their feet."
 I to the shade, that the most eager seemed 34
 To talk, myself addressing, thus began,
 As one whom too great eagerness confounds ;
 " Spirit, newborn to bliss, who in these rays 37
 Dost feel the sweetness of Eternal Life,
 Which, until tasted ne'er is understood,
 Gracious 'twould be to me, if with thy name 40
 And lot assigned thee, thou would'st me content."
 Whereon with readiness and glistening eyes :
 " Our Charity her portals never bars 43
 To just desire, save as may His direct,
 Who willeth all His court to be like Him.
 A virgin sister upon earth I was ; 46
 And if thy mem'ry be examined well,
 My fairer state will not hide me from thee,
 But thou wilt recognize Piccarda here, 49
 Who stationed now among these other blest,
 Am myself blest in this the tardiest sphere.
 Our own affections, which enkindled are 52
 In the sole pleasure of the Holy Ghost,
 Find in conformity with Him their joy.
 And this our lot which seemeth so low down, 55
 Hath been assigned us, since neglected were
 Our vows, and in some measure rendered void."
 Then I to her : " Forth from your wond'rous forms 58
 There something shines, I know not what, divine,
 Changing th' impressions of an earlier life.
 Hence did I not recall thee readily ; 61
 But what thou sayest cometh now in aid ;
 So easier 'tis thy features to retrace.
 But tell me, ye who here find happiness, 64
 Do ye desire a more exalted place

- Of wider scope, or there to find more friends?"
 Smiles she exchanged at first with th' other shades; 67
 And then made answer to me with such joy,
 That she did seem to burn in love's first fire.
 "Brother, our wills the grace of charity 70
 Keeps ever calm, and makes us only wish
 For what we have, and thirst for nothing else.
 Did we desire a station higher still, 73
 Such a desire in us would not accord
 With will of Him, Who here assigns our place;
 Which thou wilt see in these spheres cannot be, 76
 If life in love be here necessity,
 And love's own nature thou examine well.
 Nay, 'tis the formal cause of this our bliss 79
 To keep ourselves within the will of God,
 Whereby the wills of all of us are one.
 That thus we dwell, all in gradation due 82
 Throughout the realm, is to the realm its joy,
 As to its King, Who wills our will be His;
 And in this Will indeed is all our peace; 85
 It is that sea, whereto all things flow on,
 That it creates, and nature fashioneth."
 Clear was it then to me how everywhere 88
 In Heaven 'tis Paradise, e'en though the grace
 Of Good Supreme falls not in equal showers.
 But as occurs, if sated with one dish, 91
 And for another appetite remains,
 This is requested, that declined with thanks,
 E'en so did I by gesture and in word, 94
 To learn from her what web it was, through which
 She had not drawn the shuttle to the head.
 "In life perfectèd, and by her desert 97
 High heaven enfolds a Lady, by whose rule,"
 She said, "some clothe and veil themselves on earth,
 That until death they may both watch and sleep 100
 Beside that Spouse, Who every vow accepts,
 Which charity conformeth to His will.

- To follow her, forth from the world, a girl, 103
 I fled, and in her habit cloister'd me,
 And vowed the life demanded by her rule.
- Men, practised more in evil than in good, 106
 From the sweet cloister tore me then away ;
 God knows, what afterward my life became.
- This other splendour too, which shows herself 109
 To thee upon my right, enkindled there
 With all the fire that glows in this our sphere,
 Doth to herself apply, what of myself I say : 112
 She too a sister was ; and from her head
 Was torn the shadow of the sacred veil.
- But still, when to the world she'd been fetched back 115
 Against her will, and all good usage else,
 She never from her heart removed the veil.
- Of great Costanza this the light, who by 118
 The second Suabian in his stormy pride
 Conceived the third, the last of all his line."
- Thus did she speak, and *Ave Maria* 121
 Began to sing ; and singing, as a weight
 Sinks in deep water, vanished from my sight.
- My gaze, which followed in her track far as 124
 Was possible, when she was lost to view,
 Turned to the target of a fonder love,
 Directed wholly upon Beatrice. 127
 But she upon mine eyes such radiance flashed,
 That at the first my sight endured it not,
 And this made me yet slower to ask more. 130

CANTO IV.

*The first Heaven of the Moon—Imperfect Vows—The Seat
of the Blessed—The Return of Souls to the Stars—
Free Will—Broken Vows and Restitution.*

BETWEEN two morsels, tempting both alike,
A man left free, might of starvation die,
Ere he could either take between his teeth. 4
So 'tween the ravening of two savage wolves
A lamb would stand in equal dread of both,
As too would stand a hound between two hinds ;
And thus, if I were silent 'mid my doubts, 7
Urged equally by both, no blame to me,
Nor praise, under a like necessity.
I held my peace, but on my face, my wish 10
Depicted was, and my request thereby
Expressed more warmly much than if in words.
For me did Beatrice, what Daniel once 13
Did when he calmed Nebuchadnezzar's rage,
What time it made him cruelly unjust.
Said she : " I see how this desire and that 16
Distracts thee, and thine own solicitude
Itself restrains thy breath from uttering it.
Thou arguest : if the good will hold on, 19
By what right should another's violence
Curtail the measure of my own desert ?
Again thou hast a cause of doubt, in that 22
It seems men's souls return unto the stars,
As Plato in his judgment lays it down.
These are the questions, which on thy desire 25

Press with an equal weight, and therefore first
 With that I deal, which hath the greater gall.
 Of Seraphim who deepest sinks in God, 28
 Moses and Samuel, and of either John
 Choose which thou wilt, not Mary e'en herself,
 None have their seats in any heaven else, 31
 Than these blest spirits which appeared but now ;
 Nor have they more nor fewer years of life.
 But all make beautiful the primal Sphere ; 34
 And diversely enjoy the Blessed Life.
 As more or less they draw th' E'ternal Breath.
 Here these revealed themselves, not that this sphere 37
 Is their especial lot ; but as the sign
 Of heav'n first reached in speediest ascent,
 Thus to address thee suits thy power of mind, 40
 Which only through the sensuous apprehends
 What then it makes meet for the intellect.
 'Tis thus that Holy Scripture condescends 43
 To your capacity, and hands and feet
 To God attributes, meaning something else.
 And Holy Church likewise with man's aspect 46
 Doth Gabriel and Michael represent,
 And him who Tobit's sight made sound again.
 Timœus' argument about men's souls 49
 No likeness hath to that which here is seen,
 In that he seems to speak his real belief.
 He says the soul to its own star returns, 52
 Believing it had been from thence detached,
 When Nature gave it as the body's Form.
 Yet may his doctrine bear another sense 55
 Than words in sound express, and possibly
 His purpose is what we may not deride.
 If he intend that to these spheres return 58
 The honour of their influence and the blame,
 His bow perchance a partial truth may hit.
 This principle, misunderstood, misled 61
 Well nigh the whole world, till it lost its way,

Invoking Jove, and Mercury and Mars.
 The second doubt, that is disturbing thee, 64
 Less poison hath, because its ill effects
 Could ne'er lead thee elsewhere away from me.
 If justice among us appear unjust 67
 In sight of mortals, 'tis an argument
 For faith, and not for sin heretical.
 But since your apprehension can avail 70
 Into this verity to penetrate,
 As is thy wish, so will I thee content.
 If violence 'tis, when he who suffers it 73
 Contributes naught to him who useth force,
 These souls were not on this ground held excused ;
 For if it will not, Will is never crushed, 76
 But acts, as doth the natural force of fire,
 Though violence beat it down a thousand times.
 Hence if Will more or less gives way, it yields 79
 To force, as these did, who the power still had
 To turn again back to the holy place,
 If they had still unshaken kept a will, 82
 Such as held Laurence to the gridiron bound,
 And to his hand made Mucius pitiless.
 So had it driv'n them back upon the road, 85
 Whence they were dragged, as soon as they were loose ;
 But Will so resolute is all too rare.
 And by these words, if duly thou hold them 88
 Garner'd in mind, down falls the argument,
 That ofttimes might again have troubled thee.
 But yet another strait obstructs thy path 91
 Before thy very eyes, from which thyself
 Could'st not escape, ere thou wert wearied out.
 I have most surely pressed it on thy mind 94
 That soul beatified can never lie,
 Because 'tis ever close to Primal Truth ;
 And yet thou must have heard Piccarda say 97
 That for the veil Costanza kept her love,
 So that she seems to contradict me here.

- Brother, ere this, oft has it come to pass, 100
 From danger to escape, against the grain,
 Something is done, that was not right to do.
- Just as Alcmeon, who, thereto besought 103
 By his own father, his own mother slew,
 In act of duty was undutiful.
- On this point I would have thee well reflect, 106
 That violence and will may both combine,
 And leave offences inexcusable.
- The will, if free, withholds consent from ill, 109
 Which it consents to, so far as it fears,
 If it refuse, in worsèr straits to fall.
- So when Piccarda speaks, as we have heard, 112
 Will absolutely free she means, and I
 The other mean, so speak we both the 'Truth.'
- Such was the current of that sacred stream, 115
 Which issued from the Fount, whence all Truth flows,
 That now my either wish it left in peace.
- "Lady Divine, Love of the Primal Love," 118
 Said I forthwith, "whose words flow in as waves,
 Yet warm as with an ever quickening life,
- There is not in my love a depth profound 121
 Enough to render grace of thanks for grace ;
 May He, Who sees and can, to it respond.
- Well do I note, if Truth illumè it not, 124
 Outside of which naught that is true expands,
 Our intellect can ne'er be satisfied.
- On Truth it rests, as wild beast in his lair, 127
 Soon as it reacheth it ; and reach it can ;
 If not, such longing would be mockery.
- Doubt for this cause, like sucker from the stock, 130
 Springs at the foot of Truth, and nature 'tis,
 That spurs us upward, on from height to height.
- This prompts me, and a confidence inspires, 133
 With reverence due, My Lady, to ask thee
 Of still another truth, as yet obscure.
- I fain would know if man can satisfy 136

Vows unfulfilled by other pious works,
Which in your scales shall not be found too light.”
On me looked Beatrice with eyes brimfull 139
Of sparkling love, and so divine withal,
That all my force gave way ; I turned aside,
Almost bewildered, with mine eyes downcast. 142

CANTO V.

The first Heaven of the Moon—Imperfect Vows—Their Sanctity and the Possibility of their Commutation. Ascent into the Second Heaven of Mercury—Saints Active and Beneficent—The Emperor Justinian.

“IF with the fire of love I flame on thee
 Beyond the measure seen on earth below,
 So that thy powers of vision I transcend,
 No marvel for thee, for from perfect sight 4
 Proceedeth this, which, as it apprehends,
 To good thus apprehended moves its foot.
 Clearly I see how the Eternal Light 7
 Already shines in thy intelligence,
 Which, only seen, ever enkindleth love ;
 And if some other thing your love seduce, 10
 Naught is it but some vestige of this Light,
 Ill understood, that shineth through therein.
 Thou fain wouldst know if by some service else 13
 Shortcoming of a vow thou canst amend,
 So that the soul be safe from counter plea.”
 This Canto thus did Beatrice begin, 16
 And like to one that cuts not short his speech,
 Continued thus her holy argument.
 “The greatest gift which in His Bounty God 19
 Made in Creation, and the most conformed
 To His own Goodness, and by Him most prized,
 Was the full liberty of Will, wherewith 22
 The creatures of intelligence alike,
 All, and they only, were and are endowed.
 Now will be seen, if here thou reason well, 25
 A vow’s high value, if it be so made,
 That God consents, when thou consentest too.
 For in the compact made ’tween God and man, 28

This treasure makes a victim of itself,
 Such as I say ; and makes the act its deed.
 What compensation then can any give ? 31
 Think'st thou to use well, what thou hast giv'n away,
 'Twould be to turn ill gains to good account.
 On the main question now thou art assured ; 34
 But since herein dispenseth Holy Church,
 Which counter seems to what I have declared,
 Needs must thou yet awhile at table sit, 37
 In that the tough meat thou hast fed upon
 Requires for thy digestion further help.
 Open thy mind to what I now explain, 40
 And keep it fixed within, for to have heard
 And not remember, doth no knowledge make.
 Two things combine to form the essence of 43
 This sacrifice ; the first the matter is,
 Whereof 'tis made ; the compact is the next.
 This last at no time can be cancellèd, 46
 If not observed ; and in respect of this,
 It has above been laid precisely down.
 Hence with the Jews necessity there was 49
 The offerings still to make, though some of these
 Might be commuted, as thou well must know.
 The other, being matter, as was shown, 52
 May well be such that there shall be no fault,
 If it for other matter be exchanged.
 Yet from his shoulder let none lift the load 55
 At his mere choice, until for him has turned
 As well the golden as the silver key ;
 And all exchange as only folly deem, 58
 If in the substitute the thing dismissed
 Be not contained as four is found in six.
 Therefore what thing so e'er doth so much weigh 61
 In its own worth as aye to turn the scale,
 Can ne'er be satisfied by other fine.
 Let mortals ne'er at hazard risk a vow ; 64
 If made, stand to't ; but first be wide awake ;

Not like Jephthah, with pledge of what first comes ;
 Whom it behoved rather to say, " I'm wrong," 67
 Than keeping faith do worse : as foolish too
 The Greeks' great Captain thou wilt find, by whom
 For her fair face Iphigenia wept, 70
 And for her too made fools and sages weep,
 Who heard the story of the cruel rite.
 Tread, O ye Christians, with a graver step : 73
 Be not as feathers sport of every breeze,
 Nor think that every water cleanseth you.
 Ye have the Testament, the Old and New, 76
 And for your guide the Shepherd of the Church ;
 For your salvation this sufficeth you.
 If evil appetite call otherwise, 79
 Be ye as men, and not like foolish sheep,
 So that no Jew among you may deride ;
 Act not, as doth the lamb, that leaves the milk 82
 Of its own dam, in silly wantonness,
 And fights with its own shadow in disport."
 Thus Beatrice to me, as now I write : 85
 Then turned she round, with longing filled, towards
 That Point, where finds the world fulness of life.
 Her pause in speech and her transfigured form 88
 Silence imposed on my own eager mind,
 Which had new questions ready to advance ;
 And as an arrow, which upon the mark 91
 Strikes, ere vibration of the string hath ceased,
 So sped we on into the second realm.
 My Lady I saw there so jubilant, 94
 Soon as she passed into that heaven's light,
 That brighter than itself the planet shone.
 And if the star were changèd thus, and smiled, 97
 What could I be, who by mere nature am
 Susceptible to change in any form !
 As in a fish-pond, when 'tis calm and clear, 100
 The fishes rush to what from outside falls,
 As though they counted it their feeding-time,

- So splendours in their thousands I beheld 103
 Collect around us, while from each was heard :
 "One comes, who will our sev'ral loves increase."
 And as to us they one by one approached, 106
 Each shade appeared with joy and gladness filled,
 By the bright glory that flashed forth from it.
 Think, Reader, if the tale, that here begins, 109
 No further should proceed, how thou wouldst feel
 An agonizing dearth of further news ;
 And by thyself thou'lt see my own desire 112
 To hear the lot and circumstance of all,
 As to mine eyes they became manifest.
 "O happy born art thou, to whom Grace grants 115
 To see th' Eternal Triumph and its Thrones,
 Ere yet thy warfare is accomplishéd.
 We with the Light, which through all heaven expands, 118
 Are here enkindled ; if thy wish it be
 To know us clearly, satisfy thy wish."
 Thus by some one among those holy sprites 121
 Was I addressed ; and "Speak," said Beatrice,
 "Yea, freely speak, and trust all these as Gods."
 "Well do I see how thou hast made thy nest [draw'st, 124
 In light thine own, which through thine eyes thou
 As in thy smiles they flash their sparkling beams :
 But thee I know not, nor wherefore thou hast, 127
 O worthy soul, thy place within the sphere
 Veilèd from mortals in Another's rays."
 Such were my words, directed towards the light, 130
 That first addressed me, whereupon it grew
 Brighter by far than it had been before.
 Just as the sun, that hideth its own self 133
 In light excessive, as its heat dries up
 The tempering virtues of the denser airs,
 So in access of joy was hid from me 136
 In its own glorious rays the holy form,
 That, closely thus invested, answered me
 In mode, wherein the following canto sings. 139

CANTO VI.

*Second Heaven of Mercury—Spirits Active and Beneficent—
Justinian—History of the Roman Eagle—Invective
against the Ghibellines.
The Blessed in Second Heaven—Romeo da Villanova.*

“WHEN Constantine had wheeled the Eagle’s course
 Counter to that of heaven, till then pursued
 Behind the Ancient, who Lavinia took,
 A hundred and a hundred years and more 4
 God’s Bird on Europe’s farthest point remained
 Near to the hills, from which It issued first ;
 And ’neath the shadow of the sacred Wings 7
 It there through hands successive ruled the world,
 And changing thus, alighted upon mine.
 Cæsar I was, and am Justinian, 10
 Who, as Prime Love did will, as now I feel,
 Abolished laws superfluous and vain.
 And ere I set upon this work, my faith 13
 Was in one nature, and no more, in Christ,
 In which belief, contented I abode.
 But blessèd Agapetus, he who was 16
 The supreme Shepherd, to the purer Faith
 Directed me aright by his discourse.
 Him I believed, and what his faith contained, 19
 I now see clearly, as for thyself thou seest
 All contradictories are false and true.
 Soon as I walked in steps of Holy Church, 22
 It pleased God’s Grace the great emprize on me
 To breathe, and my whole self I gave to it ;
 And to my Belisarius left the troops, 25

With whom God's Hand in such conjunction wrought,
 That sign it was to me I might repose.
 Reply to thy first question endeth here ; 28
 But yet it is of such a character,
 That somewhat more it me constrains to add.
 That thou may'st estimate with how much right 31
 Men rise against that Standard Sacrosanct,
 As well usurping, as resisting it,
 Mark its high Virtue, worthy to command 34
 All reverence : " and from the hour 'gan he
 When Pallas died to 'stablish it supreme.
 " Thou know'st how it made Alba its abode 37
 Three hundred years and more, up to the end,
 When champions three 'gainst three still fought for it.
 Thou know'st its deeds from wrong to Sabine wives 40
 Unto Lucretia's woe, on through the seven kings,
 Conquering the neighbour nations all around ;
 Thou know'st its deeds by matchless Romans wrought, 43
 First against Brennus, against Pyrrhus next,
 And other chiefs and their confederates ;
 From whence Torquatus, Quinctius too surnamed 46
 From untrimmed locks, the Decü and Fabü,
 Achieved the fame, which proudly I embalm.
 Down to the dust it cast Arabian pride, 49
 Which marching after Hannibal o'erpassed
 The Alpine rocks, whence Po, thou glidest down ;
 Scipio and Pompey yet in youth 'neath it 52
 Their triumphs won ; and bitter to the hill,
 At foot of which thy birthplace stands, it proved.
 Then as drew nigh the time when Heaven would bring 55
 The whole world back to Its own mood of peace,
 Cæsar, at Rome's behest, bore it aloft :
 What it achieved from Var unto the Rhine 58
 Isère and Arar saw, Seine saw it too,
 And every valley whence the Rhone is filled.
 What it achieved when he Ravenna left, 61
 And leaped the Rubicon, was of a flight

Nor tongue nor pen could in pursuit o'ertake.
 Toward Spain then it wheeled the legions round ; 64
 Next to Durazzo ; and Pharsalia struck
 With shock, that e'en to torrid Nile was felt.
 Antandros, and Simois, whence it came, 67
 It saw once more, the spot where Hector lies ;
 Then roused itself to Ptolemy's ill fate.
 Like lightening it on Juba straightway swooped, 70
 And to your Western shore wheeled back again,
 Where blare of Pompey's trumpet it had heard.
 By what it did in the next marshal's hand, 73
 Brutus and Cassius doglike howl in hell ;
 And Modena and Perugia mourned in woe ;
 Because of it still Cleopatra wails, 76
 Who, as she fled before it, by the asp
 Was carried off in black and sudden death.
 With him it hurried to the Red Sea's shore ; 79
 With him it calmed the whole world to such peace,
 That Janus self found his own temple barr'd.
 But what this ensign, which now prompts my words, 82
 Had earlier done, and was about to do
 Throughout the mortal realm beneath its sway,
 Shows in appearance only small and dim, 85
 If we behold it in third Cæsar's hand
 With a clear eye, and with affection pure ;
 For living Justice, that inspireth me, 88
 In hand of him I speak of, granted it
 The glory of the vengeance of Its wrath.
 Yet marvel now at what I further state ; 91
 It sped with Titus afterward to deal
 Vengeance for vengeance on the ancient sin.
 And when the tooth of Longobards had torn 94
 The Holy Church, then, underneath its wings
 Victorious Charlemagne to her succour came.
 Now canst thou judge of what sort were the men, 97
 Whom whilom I accused ; and their misdeeds,
 Which are the cause of all your present ills.

- The golden lilies one sets up against
 The public flag ; and one for party ends
 Claims it ; 'tis hard to see which most offends. 100
- Let Ghibellines ply, ah ! ply their stratagems
 Beneath some other badge ; who severs this
 From Right, doth ever follow it to ill. 103
- Nor let this new Charles with his Guelphs to earth
 Abase it ; but those talons rather dread,
 Which from a mightier lion stripped its fell. 106
- Oft-times already have sons had to wail
 The father's sins, and be it ne'er supposed
 God for the lilies will His scutcheon change. 109
- This little planet doth adorn itself
 With such good spirits as have striven well,
 That fame and honour should live after them ; 112
- And when for these alone desire mounts high,
 Missing the true way thus, needs must the rays
 Of true love mount with a less living force. 115
- But just commensuration of rewards
 To merit is a portion of our joy,
 Because we see them nowise less nor more. 118
- Hence our affection living Justice doth
 In us so sweeten, that it never can
 Perverted be to an iniquity. 121
- Voices diverse below sweet music make ;
 So in our life gradations various
 Give forth sweet harmony amid these spheres. 124
- And from within this present pearl of ours
 With glorious sheen Romèo shines, whose work,
 So grand and goodly, ill requital found. 127
- But the Provençals, who 'gainst him conspired,
 No laugh may have therein ; for ill he fares,
 Who counts another's good deeds his own loss. 130
- Four daughters, and each one a queen, Raymond
 Beringhieri had ; and this for him
 A humble stranger won, Romèo hight. 133
- Ambiguous words moved afterwards the Count 136

To bring to reckoning this most honest man,
Who seven and five laid down, when ten were asked.
Thence he departed, penniless and old ; 139
And did the world but know the heart he bore,
Begging by mouthfuls for a livelihood,
Much as it lauds him, it would laud him more." 142

CANTO VII.

*Second Heaven of Mercury—Spirits Active and Beneficent—
The Death of Christ—Redemption—Immortality of the Soul.*

“*OSANNA sanctus Deus Sabaoth,
Superillustrans claritate tua
Felices ignes horum malachoth.*”

Thus, as in cadence with his notes he wheeled, 4
That Substance, over whom a double light
Sheds twofold beams, was seen by me to sing.
He and the others in their dance moved off; 7
And, as it were a shower of swiftest sparks,
In sudden distance veiled them from my view.
In hesitation to myself I said: 10
“Tell her, ay tell it out, my Lady tell,
Who with her sweet outpourings slakes my thirst.”
But reverence, which as mistress of my soul, 13
At sound of *Be* and *Ice* bows me down,
Again possessed me, as a man asleep.
Short while did Beatrice allow me thus; 16
And she began, beaming on me with smile,
That might a man enrapture e’en in flames:
“By a discernment, that ne’er plays me false, 19
In thought thou hast it, how just vengeance could
Ever with justice be in turn avenged.
But quickly will I set thy mind at rest: 22
And give me now thine ear, for these my words
The boon of grave decision shall impart.
Brooking no curb upon his power of will, 25
E’en for his good, the man, who never was
Of woman born, self damning, damned his race;
And so mankind below in sickness lay 28
For many ages in great error sunk,

Until it pleased the Word of God to come,
 Where in One Person to Himself He joined, 31
 By the sole act of His Eternal Love,
 The nature from its Maker long estranged.
 Now well observe my present argument : 34
 This nature, long as with its Maker one,
 As first created, was sincere and good ;
 But through itself alone had been exiled 37
 From Paradise, because it turned aside
 Out of the way of Truth, and its own Life.
 Therefore the pains inflicted by the Cross, 40
 If measured by the nature now assumed,
 Never more justly tortured any man ;
 And none were e'er of injury so great 43
 In the regard of Person suff'ring them,
 In whom that nature had been taken up.
 Thus from one Act issued effects diverse : 46
 God and the Jews consented to one death,
 Whereat Earth quaked, and Heaven was open'd wide.
 Henceforth should it no more seem hard to thee, 49
 When 'tis asserted that a vengeance just
 Was by a just court afterward avenged.
 But now I see thy mind in bonds of thought 52
 On thought entangled in a knot within,
 Of which it waits th' unrav'ling with desire.
 Thou say'st : Well understood is all I hear : 55
 But hid from me it is, why God should will
 This method of Redemption and none else.
 My brother, that decree lies buried from 58
 The eyes of each man, whose intelligence
 Hath not been ripen'd in the flame of Love.
 But in that to this goal long time have men 61
 Their gaze directed, and but little seen,
 I'll tell thee. why this was the worthier mode.
 Goodness Divine, which spurneth all ill will, 64
 Forth from its inner fires so scintillates,
 As its eternal beauties to display.

Whate'er from it immediately distills, 67
 Endures for aye, because It ne'er withdraws
 Its own impress from substance sealed by It.
 Whate'er from It like rain comes down direct, 70
 Is wholly free, for 'tis not liable
 To influence of anything that's change.
 More this conforms to It, it pleaseth more ; 73
 For Heav'ns own Glow, which shines on everything,
 Shows fullest life in that most like Itself,
 Of all these things the human creature doth 76
 The privilege enjoy, and if one fail,
 He needs must fall from his nobility.
 Sin only 'tis that doth disfranchise him, 79
 And render him unlike the Good Supreme,
 Whose light doth then but faintly shine on him ;
 Nor to his dignity can he return, 82
 If with just penance for his ill delights
 He fill not up the void his sin hath made.
 Your nature, when it wholly sinned in all 85
 Its progeny, from these high dignities,
 E'en as from Paradise, was banishéd :
 Nor can recovery be, if thou give heed 88
 With nice distinction, anyway at all,
 Unless by crossing one of these two fords :
 Either God only, of His free largess, 91
 Should have absolved ; or man by penitence
 Have for his folly satisfaction made.
 Fix now thine eyes deep down in the abyss 94
 Of the Eternal plan, far as thou canst,
 Fastening in close attention on my words.
 Within the limits of his nature man 97
 By self abasement and obedience ne'er
 Could satisfaction make, sinking as low,
 As by transgression he aspired to rise. 100
 And this the reason is, why by himself
 Man was shut off from power to make amends.
 To God then it belonged by His own ways 103

Man to restore to his own perfect life,
 I mean by one, or both the two indeed.
 But as to workman pleaseth best the work, 106
 In just proportion as it represents
 The goodness of the heart whence it proceeds,
 Goodness Divine, which of Itself imprints 109
 A seal upon the world, by all His means
 Well pleaséd was to lift you up again ;
 'Tween final night and primal day no plan 112
 So lofty and magnificent hath been,
 In one or other way, nor e'er shall be.
 For God's gift of Himself more generous was, 115
 Making man able to lift up himself,
 Than had He pardoned of His own free will.
 Nor had all other means been adequate 118
 Justice to meet, had not the Son of God
 In deep humility incarnate been.
 And now to gratify thy every wish, 121
 Backward I turn a passage to explain,
 That thou may's't see it eye to eye with me.
 Thou say'st: I see the water, fire I see, 124
 The earth, the air, and their commingled forms
 Turn to corruption and short while endure.
 Yet these were none the less created things. 127
 Therefore, if what I stated had been true,
 These from corruption should be all secure.
 Brother, the Angels and this pure country 130
 Wherein thou art, can say that they were made,
 As now they are, in essence perfect all.
 But all the elements that thou hast named, 133
 And those things also that of them are made,
 From a created virtue take their form
 Created was the matter they contain, 136
 Created was their virtue formative
 Within these stars, which round them aye revolve.
 The Rays and Motion of these holy Lights 139
 Draw forth the soul of every brute and plant

From matter thus potentially endowed.
But this your life Goodness Supreme inspires 142
Itself direct, and fills it with such love
Of It that for It you thenceforward yearn.
And further, justly may be hence inferred 145
Your Resurrection, if thou but recall,
How man's flesh was created at the time
When our first parents both of them were formed." 148

CANTO VIII.

*Third Heaven of Venus—Spirits of Lovers—The Planet's
Name—Charles Martel of Hungary—Robert of Naples—
Variety of Character discussed.*

THE world once thought in its old dangerous days
 That the fair Cyprian's rays bred reckless love,
 As she in the third Epicycle rolled :

So not alone to her were honours paid 4
 Of sacrifice and votive litanies
 By men of old in the old misbelief,
 But to Dione and to Cupid too, 7
 The one her mother, and him as her son,
 Telling how he had sat in Dido's lap
 From her, with whom I my beginning make, 10
 They took their title for the star, which courts
 The sun alike in sequence or advance.
 Of my ascent to her I nothing knew ; 13
 But a full faith, that I was there within,
 My Lady gave in superadded charms.
 And as in flame a spark is visible, 16
 And voice from voice in concert is distinct,
 Sustained the one, another comes and goes,
 So in that light lamps other I beheld, 19
 Revolving with a less or greater speed,
 Measured, I trow, by sight of things eterne.
 From chilling cloud never did winds sweep down, 22
 Seen or unseen, so rapid in their course,
 Which had not seemed encumberèd and slow
 To whoso had those heavenly Lights beheld, 25
 As nearer us they came, closing the round
 Begun at first 'mid Seraphim on high.
 And within those, that seemed most in advance, 28

Sounded *Hosanna* such, that never since
 Hath failed my wish to hear it yet again.
 Then closer to us one approached, alone. 31
 Who said, as he began ; " Ready all we
 To please thee so, that in us thou find joy.
 With Principalities of Heaven we here 34
 Revolve in space and time, and thirst as they,
 To whom, when in the world, thyself didst sing ;
Ye whose intelligence the third heaven moves ; 37
 And love so fills us, that to pleasure thee,
 To rest awhile will not displeasure us."
 And after to my Lady I mine eyes 40
 In reverence had submitted, and she'd made them
 Contented in assurance from herself,
 They turned again unto the Light which had 43
 Promised so much, and : " Tell me who are ye,"
 Said I in tones impressed with deepest love.
 How great and bright I saw it in th' increase 46
 Of new gladness, which, in the words I spake,
 To its own gladness in accretion came.
 Transfigured thus, it said : " Short while below 49
 The world held me, and great will be the ill,
 That had not been, if longer I had stayed.
 My very joy, that with encircling rays 52
 Hides me from view, keeps me concealed from thee,
 Like living insect swathed in its own silk.
 Well didst thou love me, and thou hadst wherefore : 55
 For had I been below, my true love would
 Have shown for thee much more than mere green leaves.
 That bank, which bathed is upon the left 58
 By Rhone, after with it the Sorgue is blent,
 Awaited me one day as sovran lord ;
 As did the Ausonian horn with cities filled 61
 Of Gaeta, Catona and Bari,
 Whence Tronto and Verde seaward discharge.
 Already gleamed upon my brow the crown 64
 Of that land, which the Danube irrigates,

After it hath the German confines left.
 And fair Trinacria above the gulf 67
 Where Eurus fiercest drives, capped with dark cloud,
 Betwixt Pachino and Peloro, not
 By Typhæus, but by native sulphur breathed, 70
 Would have expected still, as its own kings,
 Charles' and Ridolfo's sons in line through me,
 If mischievous misrule, that ever chafes 73
 The heart of subject peoples, had not roused
 Palermo to the cry: "To death, to death."
 And could my brother this beforehand see, 76
 The grasping beggary of Catalans
 Ere now he'd fled, lest it work ill for him;
 For in good sooth need is there he provide, 79
 By self or others, that no heavier load
 His overladen bark should yet receive.
 His nature, which, received from generous sire, 82
 In him is niggard, of such soldiery
 Hath need, as shall not care to hoard in chest."
 "Because I doubt not that the lofty joy 85
 Which thy speech, Sire, infuseth into me,
 Is seen by thee, e'en where I see it too,
 There, where all good begins, and finds its end, 88
 More grateful 'tis; and dearer still is this,
 That looking upon God thou seest it.
 Glad hast thou made me; so to me make plain, 91
 Since by thy words thou'st raised in me the doubt,
 How from sweet seed a bitter root can spring."
 Thus I to him; and he: "If I one truth 94
 Can show to thee in answer to thy quest,
 Thou'lt fix thine eyes, where now thy back is set.
 The good Supreme, Who all this realm thou climbs't, 97
 Moves and contents, makes His own Providence
 The living force in these great substances;
 And not the natures only are foreseen 100
 In that Mind, which is perfect in Itself,
 But their welfare together with themselves.

- Wherefore whate'er is from that Bow discharged,
 Straight as an arrow at the target aimed,
 Falls in due order on the end foreseen : 103
- If it were otherwise, the heaven thou tread'st
 Would in such fashion work out its effects,
 That ruin these would be, not Artist's work. 106
- Such cannot be, if the angelic minds,
 That in their courses move these stars, fail not ;
 And fails the Primal, if imperfect they. 109
- Wilt thou that this truth should yet clearer be ?"
 And I : " No more ; for 'tis impossible
 In aught that's needful, nature e'er should tire." 112
- And he again : " Now say, if worse 'twould be
 If men on earth lived not as citizens." 115
- " Yes," I replied, " no reasons here I seek."
 " And could this be, if men lived not below,
 In diverse states, with diverse offices ? 118
- No, if your Master write correctly here."
 Thus leading on deduction to this point,
 Concluded he : "'Tis necessary then 121
- The roots of your effects should diverse be.
 Therefore a Solon one ; another born 124
- A Xerxes, and Melchisedech the next ;
 Or he, who lost in airy flight his son.
 Nature, who sets her seal, as she revolves, 127
- On men as wax, works her art well, but yet
 Makes no selection as to where it's housed.
 Hence comes it that Esau from Jacob is 130
- Quite of another breed ; Quirinus too
 Of sire so mean, that unto Mars he's traced.
 Engendered nature would pursue its way 133
- True to the nature of its ancestry,
 If Providence Divine did not o'errule.
 So what was in the rear confronts thee now ; 136
- But to assure thee that I like thee well,
 With a corollary will I clothe thee.
 Nature always, if by a fortune met 139

Discordant with herself, like other seeds
In soil unsuitable, results in ill ;
And if the world below would set its mind 142
On the foundation nature layeth down,
And follow it, its people would be good.
But you into religion twist awry 145
One meant by birth to gird him with a sword ;
And one make king, more fit to sermonize ;
And thus your footsteps wander off the road." 148

CANTO IX.

*Third Heaven of Venus—Spirits of Lovers—An unrevealed
Prophecy—Cunizza da Romano—The Marches of Treviso—
Folco of Marseilles—Rahab—The Avarice of Clergy.*

AFTER thy Carlo, beautiful Clemence,
Had me enlightened, he set forth th' intrigues,
Which his posterity would have to face ;
“But silence,” said he ; “let the years roll on.” 4
So I no more can tell, save that remorse
Shall justly come in sequel of your wrongs.
The life already of that saintly light 7
Had to the Sun turned back, Which filleth it,
As to the Good, that satisfieth all.
Ah! cheated souls, and creatures impious, 10
Who from such Good do twist the heart aside,
Fixing your faces upon vanity !
And lo! another of those glorious lights 13
To me drew near, and signified its wish,
By its effulgent beams, to pleasure me.
The eyes of Beatrice, fixed steadfastly 16
On me, to my desire, e'en as afore,
Gave the assurance of her dear assent.
“Ah! to my wish quick satisfaction give, 19
Blest sprite,” I said, “and proof withal, that I
Can upon thee my inner thought reflect.”
Hereon the Light, stranger to me as yet, 22
From out the depth from whence afore it sang,
Sang on as one, whom to do good delights.
“Amid that part of the corrupted land 25

Of Italy, which 'twixt Rialto sits
 And the Piave and the Brenta springs, 28
 Riseth a hill, not mounting very high,
 From which there once descended a firebrand
 That made great havoc of that country side.
 From one and the same root sprang it and I; 31
 Cunizza was my name, and here I shine
 Again, because by this bright star o'ercome.
 But gladly I forgive myself the cause 34
 That here assigned my lot; nor pains it me;
 Which to your vulgar may perhaps seem bold.
 Of this dear Jewel, lustrous in its light, 37
 The nearest unto me, our heaven's own joy,
 Great fame abideth still; and ere it die,
 This hundredth year shall five times multiply. 40
 See what the man should be in excellence,
 Whose first life leaves a second to ensue.
 Of this recks not the present herd enclosed 43
 'Tween Tagliamento and the Adigè,
 Nor doth the scourge yet bring them to repent.
 But soon 'twill be that Padua in the marsh 46
 Will change the water that Vicenza bathes,
 Races to duty aye refractory.
 And where the Silê and Cagnano meet, 49
 There lords it one, marching with head on high,
 To capture whom the net is weaving now.
 The crime of its ungodly Shepherd yet 52
 Shall Feltro mourn: his sin so infamous,
 That none e'er entered Malta for the like.
 Broad beyond measure should the caldron be, 55
 That of the Ferrarese can hold the blood;
 And weary he, who weighs it ounce by ounce;
 Of which this gracious priest will make a gift 58
 To show which side he takes; and such largess
 Well to the living of that land conforms.
 Above are Mirrors, and you call them Thrones, 61
 From whence in Judgment God shines down on us,

- So that such words as these to us seem good.”
 Here she was silent, and to me appeared 64
 To turn her thoughts elsewhere, as once again
 Her former revolution she resumed.
 The other Joy, already marked by me 67
 As something glorious, glowed in my vision now,
 Like a fine ruby smitten by the sun.
 On High fresh lustre marks access of joy, 70
 As smiles on earth ; but lower down the shade
 Thickens without, as sadness broods within.
 “ God seeth all, and Spirit Blest,” I said, 73
 “ Thy vision is translated into His,
 So that no Will of His can thee escape.
 Thy voice then, which delighteth heaven alway, 76
 Singing in concert with those flames devout,
 Who of their six wings make themselves a cowl,
 Why doth it not my longing satisfy ? 79
 I would not thus await request of thine,
 If I were one in thee, as thou in me.”
 “ The broadest valley, wherein water spreads,” 82
 Such the beginning of his words, “ except
 That sea, which all the earth engarlandeth,
 Between discordant shores runs in so far 85
 Against the sun, that it meridian finds,
 Where at his rise th’ horizon’s wont to be.
 Upon this valley’s shore had I my home 88
 ’Tween Ebro and the Macra, whose brief course
 Divides the Tuscan from the Genoese.
 With the same set and well nigh rise of sun 91
 Buggea lies, and city whence I sprang,
 Which with its blood once made the harbour warm.
 Folco they called me unto whom my name 94
 Was known, and now this heav’n imprints itself
 With me, as once I did myself with it.
 For not more hotly Belus’ daughter burned, 97
 Wronging Sichœus and Creusa both,
 Than I, while such love my young locks became ;

- Nor maid of Rhodope beguilèd by 100
 Demophoön, nor yet Alcides e'en,
 When he had locked Iole in his heart.
- Yet here it is not penitence, but smiles, 103
 Not for the sin, which comes not back to mind,
 But for the Grace which ordered and foresaw.
- Here gaze we on the skill, which beautiful 106
 Makes such effects, and here discern the Good,
 That to the world above lifts that below.
- But that contented to the full thou bear 109
 Thy wishes hence, which in this sphere are born,
 It is befitting that I still speak on :
- Thou would'st fain know who in the light abides, 112
 That sparkles at my side with radiance such
 As might a sunbeam in the limpid stream.
- Now know that there within in perfect peace 115
 Is Rahab, who, unto our order join'd,
 Imprints her stamp upon our highest grade.
- Into this sphere, whereon the shadow ends, 118
 Which your world casts, first of all other souls,
 In Christ's own Triumph was she taken up.
- Meet 'twas that in some heaven she be left, 121
 A palm for aye of the high victory,
 Which the two palms, uplifted both, had won.
- For by her favouring aid did Joshua first 124
 Achieve his glory in that holy land,
 Which little touches the Pope's memory.
- Thy city, which an offset is of his, 127
 Who first upon his Maker turned his back,
 Whose envy costs the world so many a tear,
 Brings forth and spreads abroad th' accursed flower, 130
 Which sheep and lambs alike hath sent astray,
 For of the shepherd it hath made a wolf.
- For this the Gospel and great Doctors are 133
 Set on one side, and the Decretals now
 Studied alone, as well their margins show.
- Intent on this the Pope and Cardinals 136

Ne'er pass in thought to Nazareth, the place
Whither on open wings came Gabriel.
But Vatican and other chosen spots 139
Of Rome, wherein the Warrior host, who trode
In Peter's steps, once found their sepulchres,
Shall soon be freed from this adultery." 142

CANTO X.

*Fourth Heaven of the Sun—Doctors in Philosophy and
Theology—God the Supreme Artificer—Order of Creation—
Ascent into the Fourth Heaven—Spirits of Wisdom—
Theologians and Philosophers of the Ancient Schools.*

CONTEMPLATING His Son with all the Love
 That One and Other breathe eternally,
 The first creating Power, ineffable,
 Made in such order whatsoe'er in mind 4
 Or space revolves, that none can ever be,
 Who this beholds, and fails to taste of Him.
 With me then, Reader, to the wheels on high 7
 Lift up thy vision straight unto the point
 Where the two movements mutually impinge ;
 And there begin on the Great Master's art 10
 Fondly to gaze, Who in Himself loves it
 So that from it He ne'er withdraws his eye.
 See how from thence obliquely brancheth off 13
 The circle that sustains the planets course,
 To satisfy the world that them invokes ;
 And if their pathway did not thus deflect, 16
 In heaven much force were spent in vain, and here
 Below, all potency were well nigh dead.
 And had departure from the straight line swerved, 19
 Or more or less in either hemisphere,
 Great loss to mundane order had ensued.
 Reader pause here ; and inly on thy bench 22
 Reflect on what as foretaste comes to thee,
 If joy thoud'st find, or ever thou art tired.
 Thy table I have spread : to feast is thine ; 25
 For to itself the theme, of which I am
 The scribe, constrains my each and every care.

- The chiefest minister in nature's realm, 28
 That with celestial virtue stamps the world,
 And by his light measures out time to us,
 Conjoinèd with the part already named 31
 Above, was circling on the spiral lines
 By which each day he earlier appears ;
 And I was with him ; yet of my ascent 34
 Had nought perceived, save as a man perceives
 A thought, ere of its coming he's aware.
 'Tis Beatrice, none else, that speeds us on 37
 From good to better, and so suddenly,
 That her mere act anticipateth time.
 How lucent in itself must needs be each 40
 That dwells within the sun I entered then,
 Revealed, not by tint, but its own light !
 Though genius, art and practice I invoke, 43
 I ne'er could picture it to mind of man :
 Believe he may ; but for the sight must long.
 And if our phantasies be pitched too low 46
 For heights so great, no marvel is in this,
 For ne'er was eye that passed above the Sun.
 Such the fourth family, whose Father, there 49
 Supreme, aye fills it with the vision full
 Of Breathed Spirit and Begotten Son.
 And Beatrice began : " Give thanks, give thanks, 52
 Unto the Sun of Angels, Who to this,
 Perceived by sense, hath raised thee by His Grace."
 Never was mortal heart so well disposed 55
 Devoutly unto God to give itself
 With thankfulness and with entire consent,
 As stirred by this appeal I was myself ; 58
 And all my love in Him was so absorbed,
 That Beatrice in oblivion was eclipsed ;
 Yet not displeasèd she ; thereat she smiled, 61
 So that the radiance of her laughing eyes
 Dispersed to many things my centred thoughts.
 Vivid, surpassing, many lights I saw 64

Of us their centre make themselves a crown,
 Sweeter in voice than radiant to the sight.

Latona's daughter thus sometimes we see 67
 Encircled, when the air so pregnant is,
 That it retains the thread that weaves her belt.

Within the heavenly court, whence I return, 70
 Are many jewels, rare and beautiful,
 Which from that kingdom cannot here be brought ;

And among them the song those lights did sing : 73
 Who doth not plume his wing to soar so high,
 Must wait the story till the dumb man speaks.

With strains of song those burning suns did then 76
 In thrice repeated circle round us wheel,
 Like neighbouring stars around their firm-set poles.

They seemed as ladies, not withdrawn from dance, 79
 Who pause in silence, till with ear attent,
 They catch again the notes of a new strain.

And from within one did I hear begin : 82
 " Since now the ray of Grace, whereat True Love
 Takes fire, and then in loving finds increase,

So brightly shines, self multiplied, in thee, 85
 That up that stairway it leads thee aloft,
 Whence, save to reascend, descendeth none,

He who would wine deny thee from his cup, 88
 Thy thirst to slake, would have no liberty,
 Save as a stream that flows not to the sea.

Thou fain would'st know the plants and flowers that deck 91
 This garland, which encircles lovingly
 The Lady Fair, who gives thee strength for heaven.

I was a lamb among that sacred flock, 94
 Which Dominic leads by a way whereon
 Each fattens well, that goeth not astray.

This, who the nearest stands upon my right, 97
 Albert, my brother and my master, was ;
 He of Cologne, Thomas Aquinas I.

If of the rest thou would be certified, 100
 Let thine eyes follow upward on my words,

- Making the circuit of the blessed wreath.
 That second glow of fire issues from smiles 103
 Of Gratian, who to either court did give
 Such help as favour finds in Paradise.
- The other, who next him adorns our choir, 106
 The Peter was, who, like the poor widow,
 Bestowed his treasure upon Holy Church.
- The fifth light, which 'mong us the fairest is 109
 Breathes forth such love, that the whole world below
 Tidings of him doth greedily desire.
- Within it is the lofty mind, where dwelt 112
 Such depth of wisdom, that if truth be true,
 No second e'er arose to see so much.
- Beside him note the shining taper's flame, 115
 That e'en in flesh below inly discerned
 The Angels' nature and their ministry.
- Within the little sparkling fire there smiles 118
 That brave defender of the Christian days,
 Whose classic treatise served Augustine well.
- And if with the mind's eye thou follow on 121
 From light to light in sequence of my praise,
 Already thou dost thirst to know the eighth.
- In vision of all Good that holy soul 124
 Inly rejoiceth, and makes manifest
 The world's deceit to all who listen well.
- The body, whence 't was hunted forth, now lies 127
 Down in Cieldauro; and from martyrdom
 And from exile itself this peace attained.
- And yonder see what glow of ardour breathes 130
 From Isidore, and Bede, and Richard, who
 In meditation deep was more than man:
- The one, from whom to me thine eye comes back, 133
 The brightness of a spirit is, to whom
 In his deep thoughts death seemed to come too slow.
- 'Tis the eternal Light of Sigier, 136
 Who, reading lectures in the Street of Straw,
 In syllogism pressed unwelcome truths."

Then as the belfry chimes that summon us	139
At early Prime, when God's own Bride doth rise,	
With morning hymn to stir her Spouse's love,	
And with alternate stroke the hammer swings,	142
Sounding ding, ding in notes of music sweet,	
Such that the pious soul expands in love,	
So did I see the glorious wheel move off,	145
Voice echoing back in harmony with voice,	
And with a sweetness that can ne'er be known,	
Save only there, where joy endures for aye.	148

CANTO XI.

*Fourth Heaven of the Sun—Doctors in Philosophy and
Theology—Vanity of Earthly Care—Two Doubts.
Life of S. Francis—Reproof of Dominicans.*

O THE insensate care of mortal men !
 Their syllogisms how defective all,
 Leaving thy wings to flutter on the ground !
 One after law, to aphorisms one 4
 Was going, and a third the priesthood seeks ;
 One strives to rule by force or sophistry,
 By plunder one, or craft of state affairs ; 7
 Or one, in pleasures of the flesh immersed,
 Wears himself out, or sits down one in sloth ;
 The while, released from all such things as these, 10
 With Beatrice in heaven above had I
 In glorious welcome my reception found.
 When each to point in circle had again 13
 Returned, where his position was before,
 As lighted taper on its sconce, he stood.
 And from within I heard the glowing flame, 16
 That with me whilom spake, begin afresh,
 Smiling withal, as it more radiant grew :
 " E'en as my own fire kindles in Its ray, 19
 So with my gaze fixed on the Eternal Light,
 Thy thoughts I catch and what occasions them.
 Doubts hast thou, and the wish that I clear up, 22
 In language open and explicit, that
 Shall to the level of thy mind make plain
 What but just now I said : " Where fattens well," 24
 And what I said : " No second e'er arose ;"
 And here must we a plain distinction draw.
 The Providence, which governeth the world 28

With counsel such, that each created eye
 Is baffled, ere it penetrate Its depth,
 In order that to her Beloved the Bride 31
 Might nearer draw of Him, Who her betrothed
 In His blest Blood, and with a mighty cry,
 Safe in herself and truer still to Him 34
 In her behoof two Princes did ordain
 To be on this side and on that her guides.
 The one was all aglow with Seraph's fire ; 37
 The other in his wisdom was on earth
 In splendour one with light of Cherubim.
 Of one will I now speak, though of them both 40
 We speak, extolling one, whiche'er it be,
 For with one purpose did they strive alike.
 Between Tupino and the stream which flows 43
 Down from the blest Ubaldo's chosen hill,
 A fertile slope from a high mountain hangs,
 From whence Perugia feels the cold and heat 46
 Through Porta Sole ; Gualdo in its rear,
 And Nocera bewail a heavy yoke.
 Forth from the point, where most the steepness breaks 49
 Of its decline, there dawned on earth a Sun,
 Such as our own sometimes from Ganges bursts.
 Whoever therefore of this place would speak, 52
 May not Assisi call it, name too mean ;
 The Orient rather were its proper style.
 Nor from his rising had he far advanced, 55
 Ere he began to make the earth perceive
 Some comfort from his mighty virtue flow.
 For yet a boy, his father's wrath he braved 58
 For such a Lady, as to whom, like death,
 The gate of pleasure none doth e'er unbar ;
 And fronting both his spiritual court, 61
Et coram patre made her one with him,
 Day after day aye loving her the more.
 She of her first Spouse for a thousand years 64
 And hundred more bereft, despised, obscure,

- Remained without a suitor till he came ;
 Naught did report avail, that undismayed 67
 With Amyclas in calm, there found her one,
 Whose voice with terror shook th' affrighted world ;
 Naught it availed that firm in constancy, 70
 When Mary even at the foot remained,
 She climbed with Christ the summit of the Cross.
 But not to speak in too much mystery, 73
 Francis and Poverty for these lovers take,
 Of whom I sing in too diffusive verse.
 Their harmony and gladsome semblances 76
 Caused love and wonderment and interchange
 Of look to stir in others holy thoughts ;
 So that the venerable Bernard first 79
 Cast off his shoon, and in pursuit of peace
 So great, ran forth, and running seemed too slow.
 Oh ! unknown riches, oh ! prolific good ! 82
 Egidius barefoot, barefoot Silvester
 Follow the spouse, so winsome is the bride.
 Onward he goes, father and master both, 85
 With his dear Lady and that family,
 Already now with humble cord begirt :
 No cowardice of heart abashed his brow, 88
 As being son of Peter Bernardone,
 Nor that he seemed in presence wondrous mean.
 But royally his stern intention he 91
 To Innocent propounded, and from him
 First held the seal of his religious rule.
 And when the poor and little flock increased 94
 In steps of one, whose admirable life
 In heaven's high glory would be better sung,
 With yet a second crown Honorius, 97
 Moved by the Eternal Spirit from on high,
 Engirt this Archimandrite's holy wish.
 And after in the thirst of martyrdom 100
 He'd preached of Christ, and those who followed Him,
 E'en in the presence of the proud Soldan,

Finding that people still were immature	103
For their conversion, idly not to stay,	
Back to Italian fields he turned for fruit;	
There on rude rock 'twixt Tiber and Arno,	106
From Christ Himself he took the final seal,	
Which in his body for two years he bore ;	
When He, Who to such good elected him,	109
Was pleased to draw him up to the reward	
He'd earned in making no account of self,	
Unto his brethern, as his rightful heirs,	112
His dearest Lady he did recommend,	
And bade them love her with true fealty :	
And from her bosom his illustrious soul	115
Willed to depart, returning to its realm ;	
Nor for its body would he other bier.	
Bethink thee now what he was, worthy found	118
As his colleague to steer S. Peter's ship	
Across the deep sea straight upon her course !	
And such an one was our great Patriarch ;	121
So canst thou see, Who follows well the rule	
He gives, takes in a cargo of good wares.	
And yet his flock for fields and pastures new	124
Hath grown so greedy, that it cannot be	
But that through devious glades it wanders wide :	
And as his sheep the more remotely stray,	127
And wander idly farther from his track,	
Emptier of milk return they to the fold.	
There are of them who dread impending harm,	130
And to the shepherd cling ; but these so few,	
That scanty cloth will furnish all with gowns.	
Now if my words have not been indistinct,	133
If with due heed thou well hast given ear,	
If to thy mind thou call back what I said,	
Thy wish in part should now be satisfied,	136
For thou wilt see the stock from which they split,	
And the rebuke too of the belted monk,	
“ Where fattens well whoso goes not astray.”	139

CANTO XII.

*The Fourth Heaven of the Sun—Doctors in Philosophy and
Theology—A Second Coronet of Living Fires—Life of
S. Dominic—Reproof of the Franciscans—Bonaventure and
his Companions.*

SOON as the blessed flame had taken up
 Its final word to speak, at once began
 The holy millstone to revolve again,
 And had not yet its circuit fully made, 4
 Ere around it a second circle closed
 In just accord of movement and of song,
 Song, that in its melodious tones as far 7
 Transcends or Muse or Siren known to us,
 As primal splendour its reflected light.
 As in a tender cloud two arches curve 10
 In outline parallel, and of one tint,
 When Juno to her handmaid gives command,
 The one without born from the one within, 13
 (Like the voice echoed of the wandering maid,
 Whom love consumed, as mist before the sun ;)
 Making mankind regard it as presage 16
 That never shall the world be drowned again,
 Through covenant that God with Noah made ;
 So circling round us wheeled the garlands twain 19
 Of roses sempiternal, and likewise
 The outer to the inner made response.
 Then as the dance and high festivity 22
 As well of song as of scintillant fire,
 Light upon light, gladsome in mellowed joy,
 Rested in unison of time and will, 25
 As the two eyes, when pleasure moveth them,
 Together need must open or must shut ;

Forth from the heart of one of those new lights 28
 Issued a voice, that made me turn to it,
 Prompt as the needle to the polestar darts ;
 And it began : " The Love that makes me fair 31
 Stirs me to celebrate the other Chief,
 Who nobly spoke my own Chief's eulogy.
 'Tis meet with one the other should appear, 34
 That as in brotherhood of arms they fought,
 In glory they should both in union shine.
 Christ's army, which to re-quip it cost 37
 So dear a price, behind its Ensign moved
 Laggard, half heartedly, in number few ;
 When th' Emperor, Who ever reigns, found means 40
 To aid His soldiers, in their jeopardy,
 Of His sole Grace, no merit of their own ;
 And, as was said, brought succour to His Bride 43
 By champions twain, the words and deeds of whom
 The straggling forces brought again in line.
 In that direction where sweet Zephyr first 46
 Upsprings to bid the young leaves burst their buds,
 Wherein is seen Europa fresh arrayed,
 Not very far from where the waves break in, 49
 Behind which, ending now his lengthen'd course
 The sun at times from all men hides himself,
 Lies Calaroga, city fortunate, 52
 Protected by the mighty shield which shows
 The lion a subject, but a sovereign still.
 Therein was born the am'rous lover of 55
 The Christian Faith, the sanctified athlete,
 Benign to friends, to enemies a scourge ;
 And from its first creation was his mind 58
 So filled with quickening virtue that he made,
 Yet in the womb, his mother prophesy.
 After th' espousals had been solemnized 61
 At holy Font between himself and Faith,
 Where each to each pledged safety mutual,
 The lady, who for him gave the assent, 64

Saw in her sleep the admirable fruit,
 Destined to issue from him and his heirs ;
 And that plain words should tell what kind he was, 67
 A spirit from up here chose him a name
 From His possessive, Whose he wholly was.
 Domenico his name ; and of him I 70
 Speak as the husbandman elect of Christ,
 To dress His garden and help on His work.
 True messenger and confidant of Christ ; 73
 For the first love made manifest in him
 Was for the counsel given first by Christ.
 Many the time, in silence and awake, 76
 That he was found by nurse upon the ground,
 As though he'd say : " For this end 'twas, I came."
 O thou, his father, verily Felix ; 79
 His mother, too, Joanna verily ;
 If her name mean, translated, what men say !
 Not for this world, as nowadays men pore 82
 On Ostiense and on Taddeo,
 But loving Truth, the Manna of the soul,
 Within brief space a doctor great he grew, 85
 Such that he 'gan the vineyard to go round,
 Which soon grows white, if dresser be remiss.
 And from the Chair, which was of yore more kind 88
 To the poor saints, (not through its own default,
 But his, who seated there traduces it,)
 No dispensation of a third or half, 91
 Nor yet the luck of a first vacancy.
Non decimas quæ sunt pauperum Dei,
 Did he demand ; but 'gainst an erring world 94
 License to fight for that true seed of Faith,
 From which these twice twelve trees enclose thee round.
 With doctrine and a hearty will combined, 97
 With apostolic mission clothed, he went
 Like torrent bursting from deep reservoir ;
 Against the stumps of heresy he dashed 100
 With force impetuous, more eager there,

Where the resistance was more obstinate.
 From him then divers streamlets flowed, wherewith 103
 The Garden Catholic is waterèd,
 And in more vigorous life its saplings stand.
 If such were one wheel of the two-wheeled car, 106
 Wherein the Holy Church made her defence,
 And in the field subdued her civil strife,
 To thee should now be manifest what was 109
 The other's excellence, whereof, before
 I came, in words so gracious Thomas spake.
 But the wheel's track, marked by the highest part 112
 Of its circumference, is now effaced,
 And crusted wine to mouldiness is turned.
 His very children, who once walked right on, 115
 With feet in his footsteps, now backward tread,
 And with their toes press where his heels had stood :
 And soon the harvest will be manifest 118
 Of this ill tillage, when the tares lament
 That unto them the granary is denied.
 But whoso sifts our record leaf by leaf, 121
 Assured I speak, may yet some page discern.
 Where he may read : " I am what I was wont."
 Yet not from Acquasparta nor Casal 124
 Come such ; thence rather to the rule come they,
 Of whom one shirks, another tightens it.
 Bonaventura's living soul am I, 127
 Of Bagnoregis, who in great emprise
 Set ever on one side the left hand's work.
 Illuminato, Agostino too 130
 Are here, who with the first bare-footed friars
 Beneath the cord became the friends of God.
 Hugh of San Victor is among them here, 133
 Pier Mangiador, and Peter too, of Spain,
 Who still in his twelve volumes shines below ;
 Nathan, the Seer of old, and Chrysostom 136
 The Patriarch, Anselm, Donato too,
 Who to the primer deign'd to set his hand ;

CANTO XII.

365

Here is Rabanus ; and beside me shines 139
The Abbot of Calabria, Joachim,
Who with prophetic spirit was endowed.
To rivalry of such a Paladin 142
Stirred was I by the glowing courtesy
Of Brother Thomas and his choice address ;
And stirred with me was all this company. 145

CANTO XIII.

*The Fourth Heaven of the Sun—Doctors in Philosophy
and Theology.*

*A New Dance and a New Song—The Wisdom of Solomon—
Adam and Christ—Men's Vanity and Study in
Understanding Scripture, and in Judging of Others'
Salvation.*

LET one imagine, who would well conceive
 What now I saw, (and th' image keep in mind
 Fix'd as a rock before him, while I speak,)
 The fifteen stars, which in their several fields 4
 The sky enliven with a brilliancy,
 Outshining far all density of air ;
 Let him imagine then the Wain, which finds 7
 In bosom of our sky space day and night,
 So that, as sweeps its pole, it ne'er is lost ;
 Let him the mouth imagine of that horn 10
 That close begins upon the axle point,
 Round about which circles the Primal Wheel,
 Together forming two celestial signs, 13
 Such as were those that Minos' daughter made,
 What time she felt the icy chill of death ;
 One within other pouring forth its rays, 16
 And both of them revolving in such wise,
 One takes the lead, the other in the rear ;
 And shadow will he have, as 'twere, of that 19
 True constellation and the twofold dance,
 That circled round the point whereat I stood.
 For all we know is there as far surpassed, 22
 As current of Chiana is outstripped
 By that Sphere which all motion else transcends.

- No Pœan there, nor Bacchic hymn is sung, 25
 But Persons Three, Divine in nature, and
 This in One Person with the Human joined.
- The song and dance their measure had fulfilled, 28
 And upon us those saintly lights were fixed,
 Happy in duties alternating thus.
- Consentient silence mid those godlike saints 31
 That Light first broke, from whence the wondrous life
 Of God's own poor man had been shown to me ;
- And said : " Since now one straw has been well rubbed, 34
 And all its grain has now been storèd up,
 To thresh the other out sweet Love invites.
- (Thine the belief that in the breast from whence 37
 The rib was drawn to form her beauteous cheek,
 Whose palate's pleasure costs the world so dear.
- And in that Breast, which piercèd by the spear, 40
 For past and future, satisfaction such
 Did make, as turns the scale of all our guilt,
- Whate'er of Light to human nature is 43
 Vouchsafed, in fullest measure was infused
 By the same Virtue, Who created both ;
- Wherefore thou wond'rest at what I above 46
 Declared, stating no second e'er possessed
 The Good, which in the Fifth Light is enclosed.
- But open now thine eyes to my reply, 49
 And thou wilt see my words and thy belief
 Set in the Truth, like centre in an orb.
- That which can die, and that which cannot die, 52
 Are but the lustre of the Ideal Form
 Which in the act of Love our Sire begets ;
- Because that Living Light, which floweth out 55
 From Fount of Light, and never disunites
 From Him, nor from the Love, which makes the Three,
- Of His own Bounty concentrates His rays, 58
 As in a mirror, in nine Substances,
 Himself eternally remaining One.
- Thence through remotest possibilities, 61

It comes in acts successive to a depth,
 Where only brief contingencies it makes.
 By these contingencies I understand 64
 The things engendered, with seed or without,
 That heavenly bodies in their courses form.
 These in their wax, and that which mouldeth it, 67
 In action vary, and therefore more or less
 Beneath the seal shines out the Archetype :
 Hence happens it that trees, one and the same 70
 In species, bear a better or worse fruit ;
 Yourselves too born with diverse powers of mind.
 If to perfection were the wax prepared, 73
 And heaven's full virtue in supremacy,
 The signet's light would in full glory shine :
 But nature aye presents this in defect, 76
 Working as doth the artist, who in art
 Is fully trained, but paints with trembling hand.
 So if the warmth of Love, and Vision clear 79
 Of Primal Virtue do dispose and seal,
 The fulness of perfection then is gained.
 E'en so the dust of earth was worthy deemed 82
 Of full perfection in the living man ;
 E'en so the Virgin in her womb conceived.
 Therefore thine own opinion I commend, 85
 That ne'er hath been a human nature such,
 Nor shall be, as was in those persons twain.
 And now, if I no farther should proceed, 88
 " How was this other without equal then ? "
 Would be the first words of your utterance.
 But to make clear what seems by no means clear, 91
 Think who he was, and by what motive stirred
 To frame his prayer, when he was bidden, " Ask."
 I have not spoken so that thou could'st not 94
 Well see he was a King, who wisdom asked,
 That he might be an all sufficient King :
 Not curious he to know the number of 97
 Motors in heaven, nor if necessity

Can with contingent make necessity ;
 Not *si est dare primum motum esse*, 100
 Nor if in semicircle can be drawn
 Triangle such as no right angle hath.
 Now if thou note both what I say and said, 103
 Thou'lt see the matchless prudence of a King
 Is what the arrow of my meaning hits.
 And if to "*surse*" thou direct keen eyes, 106
 Thou'lt see it hath respect to Kings alone,
 Who many are indeed, though few the good.
 With this distinction take then what I said : 109
 And thus can it stand well with thy belief
 In the first father, and our Well Beloved.
 And let this be as lead unto thy feet, 112
 To make thee, like a tired man, slow to move
 Both to the yes and no which thou seest not ;
 For very low among the fools lies he, 115
 Who unconditioned "*yea*" or "*nay*" asserts,
 As well in one as in the other case ;
 Because it happens oft, opinion formed 118
 In haste will to a false conclusion lean,
 And prejudice then binds intelligence.
 Much worse than vainly from the shore he starts, 121
 Who without training fishes for the Truth,
 Because he comes back other than he went,
 Whereof proofs manifest are seen abroad ; 124
 Melissus, Brissus and Parmenides,
 And many more going, they knew not where :
 So did Sabellius, Arius and those fools 127
 Who to the Scriptures placed themselves like swords,
 That show fair faces in distorted forms.
 Nor yet again let people be too sure 130
 In forming judgment, like a man who counts
 The ears in corn field, ere they yet are ripe :
 For I have seen the livelong winter through 133
 A wild briar show prickly and stiff at first,
 Yet later bearing roses to the top ;

- And ship I've seen trimly ere while and swift 136
Skimming her passage o'er the open sea,
Founder at last upon the haven's mouth.
- No Mistress Bertha nor Sir Martin may, 139
Seeing one steal, and one give alms, suppose
They see the inner purposes of God,
For one may rise, the other fall away. 142

CANTO XIV.

*Fourth Heaven of the Sun. Doctors in Philosophy and
Theology—The Glory of the Blest after the Resurrection—
A Third Garland of Lights—Ascent unto Heaven of Mars—
Martyrs—The Cross in Mars. Harmony of Voices—
Danté's Ecstasy.*

FROM centre to the rim and from the rim
 To centre in a round bowl water moves,
 As smitten from outside, or from within.
 Unto my mind did suddenly occur 4
 The figure I employ, so soon as did
 The living voice of Glorious Thomas cease,
 By the similitude which had its birth 7
 From his discourse, and that of Beatrice,
 Whom after him it pleased thus to begin.
 "This man hath need, although he tell you not 10
 Either by voice or e'en as yet in thought,
 To reach the root of still another truth.
 Say, if the light, which with its bloom bedecks 13
 Your substance, will with you for aye remain
 Eternally the same, as it is now ;
 And if remaining, say, how afterward, 16
 When in form visible you are renewed,
 This can be so without distress to sight."
 As they, who in the dance together wheel, 19
 And urged and drawn by stir of quickened joy,
 Lift up the voice with signs of livelier mirth,
 So at her prayer, promptly and humbly made, 22
 A new delight the holy spheres displayed
 In their gyrations and their wondrous notes.
 Whoso laments that man hath here to die 25

Yonder above to live, hath never there
 Seen the refreshment of the eternal rain.
 The One, the Two, the Three, Who ever lives 28
 And ever reigns in Three and Two and One,
 Not circumscribed, and circumscribing all,
 They praised in threefold chant, sung by each one 31
 Of all those spirits with such melody
 As for all merit 'twere a full reward.
 And in the Light that more divinely glowed 34
 Forth from the lesser round a modest voice—
 To Mary so perchance the Angel spake—
 I heard reply : “ Long as the festival 37
 Of Paradise endures, so long our love
 Shall in its rays weave round us such a robe ;
 Its brightness to our ardour correspond, 40
 The ardour to our vision ; this as full
 As Grace shall supplement its own deserts.
 When we in flesh, holy and glorified, 43
 Shall be re-clothed, our person shall
 Be then more pleasing, because then complete.
 Hereby will increase come unto the Light 46
 Which the Chief Good of His free Grace imparts ;
 Light that befits us to behold Himself.
 Greater therein needs must our vision grow, 49
 Greater the ardour, which from that takes fire,
 Greater the lustre, which from this proceeds.
 But as the coal, which sendeth up a flame, 52
 In incandescent glow surpasseth it,
 And thus maintains itself in evidence,
 So shall the splendour now encircling us 55
 Be far outshone when re-appears the flesh
 Now hidden underground the livelong day.
 Nor shall such light to us o'erwhelming be ; 58
 For every organ of the body will
 Be strong to bear all that shall give delight.”
 Promptly and briskly, as it seemed to me, 61
 Each choir assented with an *Amen* that

Well showed how they for their dead bodies yearned ;
 Not for themselves perchance alone, but for 64
 Their mothers, fathers, and all dear to them,
 Or ever they became eternal fires.
 And lo ! all round in equal brightness sprang 67
 A glory that encompassed what was there,
 Like an horizon that begins to clear.
 And as at rise of evening's first twilight 70
 New forms in heaven begin to show, so that
 To sight they seem untrue, though very true,
 New substances did there appear to me 73
 To come in view, and form a circle round
 Outside the other two circumferences.
 O true effulgence of the Holy Breath ! 76
 How dazzling 'twas, as suddenly it fell
 Upon mine eyes with light they could not bear !
 But Beatrice vouchsafed to me her smiles 79
 In beauty such, that with what other sights
 Beyond my memory reach, must it be left.
 Gaining from her the strength to raise mine eyes, 82
 I saw me with my Lady borne aloft,
 Alone with her, to more exalted bliss.
 That higher I'd been raised, I well perceived 85
 By smiles of fiery brightness in the star,
 Which showed a ruddier than its wonted red.
 With my whole heart and with the tongue that's one 88
 With all of us, I made a holocaust
 To God for such a grace newly vouchsafed.
 Nor in my breast had yet burnt out the flame 91
 Of this my sacrifice, ere well I knew
 My prayer with favour had acceptance found :
 For of such brightness and so ruby-red 94
 Splendours appeared to me within two rays,
 "O God !" I cried, "Who thus bedeckest them !"
 As whitens 'tween the poles of our own world 97
 The milky way, marked out by lights, or less
 Or greater, whereof sages rest in doubt,

- So did those rays form in the depth of Mars 100
 In starry groups the venerable Sign,
 Which conjoined quadrants in the circle make.
- Wit lacks the words to tell what thought recalls : 103
 For from the Cross like lightning gleamed the Christ,
 So that no fit similitude I find :
- But whoso takes his Cross and follows Christ, 106
 Will yet forgive me, that I falter here,
 When in that Dawn he sees flash forth the Christ.
- From horn to horn, from summit to the base, 109
 Lights shot in dazzling scintillations, as
 They met, conjoined, and sped in onward flight.
- So see we here in straight or devious course, 112
 Now swift, now slow, in ever shifting form,
 Atoms minute, some long and shorter some,
- Dance in the sunbeam that with streak of light 115
 Breaks sometimes through the shade, that for defence
 Men make with thought and curious artifice.
- And as the harp and viol, strung to tune, 118
 Of many strings make a sweet harmony
 To one that understandeth not the words ;
- So from the lights, which there appeared to me, 121
 Gathered about the Cross a melody,
 Which left me rapt, the hymn not understood.
- Well I perceived the strains were of high praise, 124
 For the words reached me, " Rise, O Conqueror, rise,"
 As one that understands not, though he hears.
- So much was I thereof enamourèd, 127
 That till that hour there never had been aught,
 That held me captive in so sweet a thrall.
- Perhaps my words may seem somewhat too bold, 130
 Postponing yet the charm of those fair eyes,
 Gazing whereon my longing finds repose ;
- But who considers that the Living Seals 133
 Of all that's fair, wax mightier as they rise,
 And that I had not yet turned round to these,
- May me excuse, where I myself accuse 136

In self excuse ; and see I speak the Truth ;
For saintly joy is not excluded here,
Since as it rises, less th' alloy it shows.

CANTO XV.

*Fifth Heaven of Mars—Martyrs for Religion—Cacciaguida—
Old Florence—Dante's Ancestry.*

THE kindly will that ever shows itself
 In love, that only breathes in righteousness,
 As doth an evil will in selfishness,
 Silence imposed upon that sweet-toned lyre ; 4
 And in their stillness left the holy cords
 Which Heaven's right hand relaxes and contracts.
 How shall those substances a deaf ear turn 7
 To righteous prayer, who to give me desire
 To pray to them, with one consent were hushed ?
 'Tis right the man for evermore should mourn, 10
 Who, for the love of something of no stay,
 Of that Love strips himself eternally.
 As in the calm and pure serene of night, 13
 Now and again, shoots forth a sudden fire
 Startling the eyes that were before at rest,
 And seems a star that changeth its abode, 16
 Save that at point where it breaks forth in fire,
 No star is lost, and this short while endures ;
 Such from the horn extending on the right 19
 To foot of that Cross sped a star from forth
 The constellation, that is there aglow ;
 Nor from its riband did the jewel drop, 22
 But traversed in full length the radiant line,
 Which showed like fire through alabaster seen.
 So hastened once Anchises' pious shade, 25
 If credit here our greater Muse deserve,
 When in Elysium he perceived his son.
 " *O sanguis meus, O superinfusa* 28
Gratia Dei, sicut tibi, cui

Bis unquam coeli janua reclusa ?”

- So spake that Light: whereat I marked him well ; 31
 Then to my Lady turned mine eyes once more,
 Lost in amazement upon either side.
- For from within her eyes there glowed a smile, 34
 Such that I thought mine own had plumbed the depth
 Both of my grace and of my Paradise.
- And gladsome then to hear and look upon, 37
 The spirit added to his opening words
 Things of such depth I could not fathom them.
- And not of choice did he thus hide from me, 40
 But of necessity, because his thought
 Beyond the mark of mortal mind was pitched.
- And when the high strung bow of ardent love 43
 Relaxed so far, that it in speech came down
 Within the mark of our intelligence ;
- The first thing, that by me was understood, 46
 Was this : “ Blessed be Thou, the Three and One,
 Who show’st Thyself so gracious to my seed.”
- Then he went on : “ A long and grateful fast, 49
 Spent in perusal of the mighty tome,
 Wherein ne’er changeth either white or black,
- Hast thou, my son, for me dispensed within 52
 This Light, wherein I speak thee, thanks to her,
 Who for the lofty flight clothed thee with wings.
- Thou deemest that thy thought to me makes way 55
 From primal Thought, as from the unit, if
 This first be known, issue the five and six.
- So who I am, and why I show myself 58
 More glad to thee, than any other midst
 This mirthful throng, thou askest not of me.
- Thou thinkest well, for all, greater or less, 61
 In this life on that Mirror fix their gaze,
 Whereon, ere thought, thy thought lies full outspread.
- But that the sacred Love, wherein I watch 64
 In gaze continuous, and which makes me thirst
 In sweet desire, may be more fully filled,

- Let now thy voice, happy, secure and bold, 67
 Tell out thy wish, yea tell thy whole desire,
 Whereto my answer is e'en now decreed."
- To Beatrice I turned, and me she'd heard 70
 Ere yet I spake, and added an assent
 That made my wings of will the stronger grow.
- Then I began : " Soon as to you appeared 73
 The Prime Equality, wisdom and love
 Were found by each of you in weight alike :
- For in the Sun, which warmed you and illumed 76
 With heat and light, equality is such,
 Similitudes are all inadequate.
- But among men will and its utterance, 79
 For causes that are manifest to you,
 Are feathered diversely upon their wings.
- Hence I, who mortal am, feel in myself 82
 This inequality, and but in heart
 Can for a father's welcome speak my thanks.
- Yet thee, O Living Topaz, I implore, 85
 Set in this precious Jewel as a gem,
 That with thy name, thou satisfy my prayer."
- " Branch of my tree, the mere expectancy 88
 Of whom hath been my joy, I was thy root : "
- Such the beginning he in answer made.
- Then he resumed : " He, from whom first thy house 91
 Its surname takes, and who a hundred years
 And more hath circled round the Mount's first ledge,
 Was my own son, and thy great grandfather : 94
 Most fitting 'twere that his long weariness
 Thou shorten for him by thine own good works.
- Florence in circuit of her ancient walls, 97
 Whence still she hears the call of tierce and nones,
 In chaste sobriety abode in peace.
- There was no necklet and no coronet ; 100
 No buskined ladies with their stomachers,
 A sight more wondrous than the dames themselves.
- Never as yet did daughter's birth alarm 103

- A father's heart, in that nor age nor dower
 On either side just moderation spurned.
- No houses had she void of families ; 106
 Sardanapalus had not yet arrived
 To show what folks in privacy could dare.
- Not yet had Montemalo been out done 109
 By your Uccellatoio ; but surpassed
 In height, so shall it be in ruin too.
- I saw Bellincion Berti go engirt 112
 With leather and with bone ; from mirror too
 His wife return, her face untouched by paint.
- Him of the Nerli, and of Vecchio him 115
 I saw contented in a suit of buff,
 As were their wives with spindle and with flax.
- O happy they, each one assured to find 118
 Her grave in the familiar spot ; none yet
 For sake of France left in a lonely bed.
- One by the cradle kept her loving watch, 121
 Soothing her babe with fond and childish words,
 To fathers and to mothers their first joy.
- Another, from her distaff drawing threads, 124
 Told to her family her old world tales
 Of Trojans and Fièsolè and Rome.
- To such as great a marvel had been then 127
 A Cianghella or Lapo Salterel,
 As Cincinnatus or Cornelia now.
- To life thus tranquil and thus beautiful 130
 Of citizens, and to community
 So true, into a resting-place so sweet,
- Mary brought me, invoked in birth-pang cry ; 133
 And in your ancient Baptistry at once
 Christian and Cacciaguida I became.
- Moronto was my brother and Eliseo ; 136
 My wife from Val di Pado came to me ;
 From her didst thou receive thine own surname.
- Then in the Emperor Conrad's train I marched, 139
 Who girt me as a knight of chivalry,

So had I pleased him by my valiant deeds.
I followed him against the infamy 142
Of that decree, which by the Shepherd's sin
Sets a usurping people in your rights.
There was I by that shameful race of men 145
From the deceptions of the world set free,
The love of which debaseth many a soul,
And came from martyrdom unto this peace." 148

CANTO XVI.

*Fifth Heaven of Mars—Martyrs of Religion—Nobility
extolled—Cacciagnida and his Ancestry—Old and New
Inhabitants of Florence.*

POOOR thing is our nobility of blood !
 Yet if thou make the people boast of thee
 Down here, where our affections are but frail,
 No marvel henceforth will it be with me, 4
 Since there, where inclination is not warp'd,
 In heaven I mean, I found my boast in thee.
 A mantle art thou, soon cut short indeed, 7
 If not from day to day repieced, as Time
 Plies in his constant round his busy shears.
 With plural "You," which Rome permitted first, 10
 A use her sons but little now retain,
 The words of my address once more began ;
 When Beatrice, who stood somewhat apart, 13
 Seemed by her smile like her, who by her cough
 Marks in the story Guinevere's first fall.
 "You my own Father are ;" thus I began, 16
 You give to me all hardihood of speech ;
 You exalt me, till more than self I am ;
 Joy from so many sources fills my mind, 19
 That in itself it finds a happiness,
 In that it holds all this, and bursteth not.
 Tell me then, you, my dear progenitor, 22
 Who your forefathers were, and what the years,
 Which of your boyhood bear the first record.
 And tell me of the sheepfold of St. John ; 25
 What at that time its size, and who were then
 Worthy within it of the higher seats."
 As at the breathing of the wind a brand 28

Revives in flame, so saw I then that Light
 The brighter shine at my endearing words.
 And as before mine eyes it fairer grew, 31
 So in a voice still gentler and more sweet,
 But not in dialect of modern use,
 It said : " From day when *Ave* first was heard, 34
 To birthday, when my mother, now a Saint,
 Of me was lightened, with whom she was great,
 Five hundred times, fifty and thirty more, 37
 This fiery Star had to its Lion come,
 Its flame once more to kindle 'neath his paw.
 My ancestors and I were all born there, 40
 Where enters first upon the last town's-ward
 Whoever races in your annual games.
 Suffice it of my elders now so much : 43
 Who they were first, and whence they thither came
 Is better left in silence than discussed.
 All those, who in that day could carry arms 46
 Between Mars' statue and the Baptist'ry
 Where but a fifth of those who live there now.
 But our free citizens, with Campi since, 49
 Certaldo and Figline intermixed,
 Were thoroughbred to humblest artizan.
 Far better, if as neighbours they had stayed, 52
 The folk I speak of, with the bound'ry line
 At Trespiano and Galuzzo fixed,
 Than to have them inside, and bear the stench 55
 Of the Aguglion boor, or one that brings
 Keen eyes from Signa, set on jobbery.
 If but the sect, degenerate most of all, 58
 Had not to Cæsar a mere stepdame been,
 But as a mother kindly to her son,
 There's one, made Florentine, who trades on change, 61
 That back to Simifonti had been sent,
 Where once his grandsire went his begging round ;
 In Montemurlo still might Conti be ; 64
 Acone parish of the Cerchi too ;

- And Buondelmontio p'rhaps in Valdigreve.
 Persons of mixèd breed have ever been 67
 The first beginning of a city's woe,
 As with the body loads of divers meats.
- And a blind bull falls headlong quicker much 70
 Than the blind lamb, and ofttimes and again
 One sword will better cut, and more, than five.
- Luni recall, and Urbisaglia on, 73
 How both are gone ; and Chiusi after them
 With Sinigaglia is following on :
- So that to hear that families run out 76
 Will not appear aught strange or difficult,
 Seeing that Cities even have their term.
- All things of yours await their time of death, 79
 E'en as yourselves ; yea, and it lurks in what
 To you seems long lived, 'cause your lives are short ;
- And as the changes of the Moon on high 82
 Work on the shore a ceaseless ebb and flow,
 So likewise with Firenze fortune deals.
- Wherefore it should not seem aught wonderful, 85
 That I shall tell of the great Florentines,
 Whose fame is hidden in the lapse of time.
- I saw the Ughi, Catellini too, 88
 Filippi, Alberichi, Ormanni,
 And Greci fade, famed burghers to the end.
- I saw in greatness equal to their birth 91
 The houses of Sanella and Arca,
 Bostichi, Soldanier and Ardinghi.
- Above the Gate, which nowadays is charged 94
 With a new perfidy in weight so gross,
 It soon will be the foundering of the ship,
- The Ravignani dwelt, from whom there sprang 97
 The County Guy, and all who from the proud
 Bellincione after took their name.
- The della Pressa knew already how 100
 Men ought to rule, and Galigaio had
 The gilded hilt and pommel in his house.

- Famed was the Column with the ermine pale, 103
 Giuochi, Sacchetti, Fifanti, Galli,
 Barucci, and the house the bushel shames.
- The stock, from which the Calfucci first sprang, 106
 E'en then was great; e'en then to curule chairs
 Were Arrigucci and the Sizii drawn.
- Oh! what were those I saw, but now undone 109
 By their own pride! Oh! how the golden balls
 Made Florence flourish in her grand exploits.
- Such were the deeds of men, whose sons to-day, 112
 Soon as the throne is vacant in your Church,
 Throng the consistory and batten there.
- The breed of insolence, which dragon-like 115
 Fastens on him that flies, but let one show
 Tooth or e'en purse, 'tis gentle as a lamb,
- Was rising up, but of such humbler sort, 118
 That Ubertin Donato brook'd it ill,
 When his wife's father made him kin with them.
- Down to the Market from Fièsolè 121
 E'en now had Caponsacco come; Giuda
 And Infangato now good burghers held.
- A thing incredible, but true, I tell: 124
 Into the little circuit by a gate,
 Named from the della Pera, folk came in.
- Each on whose shield is borne the fair device 127
 Of the great Baron, whose repute and fame
 The feast of Thomas keepeth ever fresh,
- Knighthood received and privilege; 130
 Although to-day with common folk unites
 One, who himself bears arms in fringe of gold.
- The Gualterotti, Importuni too 133
 Were there e'en now; but calmer Borgo were,
 If for new immigrants 'twere fasting still.
- The house, from whence your sorrow had its birth, 136
 Through just resentment, which hath been your death
 And put an end to all your joys of life,
 With all its clansmen was in honour held. 139

O Buondelmonte, ill didst thou to break,
When others urged, the troth thou'dst plighted once.
Happy had many been, who now are sad, 142
If God to Ema had consignèd thee,
When first unto the city thou didst come.
But fated 'twas, that to the mouldering stone 145
Which guards her bridge, Florence should immolate
A victim in her latest days of peace.
With these and other families like them 148
I saw Firenze lapped in such repose,
That there was nought, whereof she'd cause to grieve.
With these I saw her people growing up 151
So glorious and so just, that never was
Her lily seen reversed upon the lance
Nor e'er by party spirit turned to gules. 154

CANTO XVII.

Fifth heaven of Mars—Martyrs of Religion—Sorrows of Exile—Misfortunes and Hopes of Dante—The Courage of Virtue.

AS, to assure himself of what he heard
 Against himself, to Clymene once came
 He, who makes fathers still reserved with sons,
 Such was myself, and such perceived to be 4
 By Beatrice and by the saintly Lamp,
 Which had already for me changed its place.
 Whereon my Lady : "Let the fire break forth 7
 Of thy desire," she said, "that it issue
 Well stamped with impress of thy inner self.
 Not that our knowledge can an increase gain 10
 From speech of thine, but that thyself grow used
 To tell thy thirst, so one may fill thy cup."
 "Root of my clan, beloved, who reachest up 13
 So high, that as on earth our minds see well
 Two obtuse angles no triangle holds,
 So our contingencies dost thou perceive, 16
 Ere in themselves existent, watching aye
 The Point, where in one present all times meet ;
 Whilst at the side of Virgil I moved on 19
 Up o'er the mount, which healeth stricken souls,
 As when descending to the world of death,
 To me were said ament my future life 22
 Words of grave import, though I feel myself
 Proof in foursquare against the blows of chance.
 My wish would therefore well contented be 25
 To learn the fortune that is drawing on,

- For arrow, if foreseen, more gently falls.”
 Thus spake I unto that same Light that me 28
 Before addressed ; and as by Beatrice
 Desired, my wish was openly expressed.
 Nor in those words ambiguous that fools 31
 Of old besmeared their meaning with, ere slain
 The Lamb of God, that taketh sin away ;
 But in clear terms and homely mother tongue 34
 To me did love paternal answer make,
 Veiled, but apparent in his own bright smile.
 “ Contingency, which ne’er extends beyond 37
 The “ *daybook* ” of your own material world,
 Is full depicted in the Eternal View.
 Yet no necessity is thence implied 40
 More than by eye, which on itself reflects
 A ship that drifts its course adown the stream.
 From thence, e’en as upon the ear there comes 43
 Sweet music from an organ, so in sight
 To me there comes what time prepares for thee.
 As one Hippolytus from Athens fled 46
 Through a step-mother’s spiteful calumny,
 From Florence likewise needs must thou go forth.
 This is decreed, the means already sought, 49
 Soon to be done by him, who schemes it there,
 Where all day Christ as merchandize is sold.
 Blame will pursue the injured party still 52
 With wonted outcry, but due vengeance shall
 Attest in truth Whose minister it is.
 Thou shalt abandon all that most of all 55
 Thy dearest is ; and this the arrow, which
 The bow of banishment dischargeth first ;
 Thou shalt have proof how salt the savour is 58
 Of others’ bread ; and how the way is hard
 That leadeth up and down another’s stair ;
 And what shall gall thy shoulder worst of all 61
 Will be the senseless and malignant mates,
 With whom into this valley thou wilt fall ;

For ingrates all, all mad and impious, 64
 They'll range themselves 'gainst thee ; but very soon
 Their's and not thine shall be the reddened brow.
 The issue of their brutish policy 67
 Will be a proof, that it was well for thee
 To form thy party of thyself alone.
 Thy first retreat and shelter first will be 70
 In the great Lombard's hospitality,
 Who on the ladder bears the holy bird ;
 So kindly will be his regard for thee, 73
 That 'tween you two, in act and in request,
 That will be first, which others make the last.
 With him thou'lt see the one, on whom at birth 76
 This valiant star so stamped its character,
 That notable will be his great exploits.
 Of him the nations are not yet aware 79
 In his first tender age, since but nine years
 These wheels around him in their course have rolled.
 But ere the Gascon noble Henry fools, 82
 Some sparkles of his valour will appear
 In his indifference to pelf and toil.
 His oft magnificence, when known to men, 85
 Will yet be such that e'en his enemies
 Cannot of this to silence bind their tongues.
 On him wait thou, and on his kindnesses : 88
 By him shall many folk transposèd be,
 Rich men and beggars interchanging place :
 And thou shalt carry off on mem'ry writ 91
 Of him—but silence here." Things then he told
 Past all belief, even when seen fulfilled.
 "Such," added he, "the glosses are, my son, 94
 On what was said to thee ; these the intrigues
 That lurk behind a few revolving years.
 Yet would I have thee grudge no neighbour's lot, 97
 For to a future reacheth on thy life
 Outstretching far their doom of perfidy."
 When by its silence showed the holy soul 100

- Itself discharged from farther work of woof
 Into the web I'd offered it in warp,
 'Gan I, as one that eagerly desires 103
 Amid his doubts a counsellor's advice,
 Who hath discernment, honesty and love :
 "Clearly I see, my Father, how towards me 106
 Pricks on the time, hastening to strike a blow
 That heaviest falls on whoso most desponds :
 Wherefore 'tis well with foresight to be armed, 109
 That, if from me the dearest spot be reft,
 All else I lose not by mischance of song.
 Down in the world of endless pain below, 112
 And on the mountain from whose summit fair
 My Lady's eyes did hither lift me up,
 And later through this heaven from light to light, 115
 That have I learned, which if I tell again,
 To many will it prove a bitter draught !
 And if to Truth I prove a timid friend, 118
 I fear that I may lose a life mid those,
 Who in their time will call these ancient days."
 The smiles of Light, wherein my treasure glowed. 121
 Whom there I'd found, at first with radiance shone,
 Like golden mirror smitten by the sun ;
 Then he replied : "A conscience overcast 124
 Or by its own, or by another's shame,
 Alone shall feel a roughness in thy words,
 But none the less, setting all lies aside, 127
 All thou hast seen make clear and manifest,
 And leave the scratching where the itching is.
 For if this voice of thine shall noisome be 130
 At the first taste, a vital nutriment
 'Twill leave behind, when once digested well.
 This cry of thine will work, as doth the wind, 133
 That beats the hardest on the highest points :
 And no small sign of honour will this be.
 Therefore have been, amid the circles here, 136
 Up on the Mount, and in the dismal vale,

Souls only shown thee, that are known to fame ;
For in his heart the hearer finds no rest, 139
Nor faith confirmed by instance that is based
On root unknown, and hidden out of view,
Nor by such reas'ning as lacks evidence." 142

CANTO XVIII.

*Fifth Heaven of Mars—Martyrs of Religion—Resplendent
Spirits in the Cross of Mars—Ascent to Heaven of Jupiter—
Wise and Just Princes—Diligite Justitiam—The Imperial
Eagle—Papal Avarice.*

IN his own thoughts alone that mirror blest
 Found now his joy ; and I my own did taste,
 The bitter intermingling with the sweet ;
 When the Lady, who Godward led me on, 4
 Said then: “Change nowthy thoughts! bethink thee that
 I stand near Him, Who lightens every load.”
 Toward Comfort’s loving voice I turned me round, 7
 And what love then I in her saintly eyes
 Beheld, I leave without attempt to tell ;
 Not only that I now distrust my speech, 10
 But mem’ry faileth to go back so far
 Above itself, unless by Other led.
 Of such a moment can I but relate, 13
 That gazing on her once again, my heart
 From ev’ry longing else was wholly freed.
 While thus Eternal Joy, streaming direct 16
 On Beatrice, wholly contented me,
 With Its reflection from her beauteous face
 O’erpowering me with one bright beam of smile, 19
 She said: “Now turn thee and give ear ; for not
 Within mine eyes alone is Paradise.”
 As sometimes here is seen forth from the eyes 22
 A glance of love that, be it great enough,
 Will carry off the entire soul with it,
 So by the flashes from the holy fire 25
 Whereto I turned, I recognized the wish
 In him of further converse with me yet ;

- And he began ; “ On this the fifth stage of 28
 The tree, which from its summit draws its life,
 And ever fruits, and never sheds its leaf,
 Are blessed spirits, who below, or e'er 31
 To heaven they came, were of such fame possessed,
 That every muse had found rich theme in them
 Look on the Cross ; fix on its arms thine eyes : 34
 He, that I now shall name, will there enact
 That which the cloud doth with its own swift fire.
 And o'er the Cross a trail of light I saw 37
 At sound of Joshua's name, swift as he spoke ;
 The word scarce uttered, e'er I saw the fact.
 And at the name of the great Maccabee 40
 I saw another wheel in circles round,
 And rapture was the lash that spun the top.
 So with Orlando and with Charlemagne, 43
 In close attention I pursued them both
 Like one, whose eye follows his falcon's flight.
 And William next, Rainard, and Gottifried, 46
 The Duke, successively athwart the Cross
 Drew my regard, and Robert Guiscard too.
 In movement mingling with the other Lights, 49
 The soul, who with me spake, showed them how great
 An artist was he in the heavenly choir.
 I turned me on the right to Beatrice 52
 To see in her, what duty, signified
 By word or gesture, she required of me ;
 And in her eyes I saw so pure a light, 55
 Brimming with Joy, that she in form outshone
 As well her earlier as her latest self.
 And as in finding ever new delight 58
 In honest work, a man from day to day
 Is conscious that his inner powers advance,
 So was I conscious, as I circled round 61
 In heaven's own course, of an enlargèd arc,
 Seeing that Miracle more glorified.
 And rapid as the change in briefest space 64

Of time on a pale woman's cheek, whose face
 Is from the load of bashful flush relieved ;
 Such to mine eyes, as I looked round, appeared 67
 The glistening whiteness of the attempered star,
 The sixth, which had received me in itself.
 Within the joy of Jove's own star I saw 70
 The sparkling of the Love, that it enshrined,
 Take shape in letters of our alphabet.
 And as birds risen from the river's bank, 73
 As if each greeting other at their feast,
 Form into circles, or in other groups,
 E'en so did saintly beings in their lights 76
 Hover around in song, and range themselves
 In letter'd form of D, or I, or L.
 At first they moved in cadence to their song ; 79
 Then in these symbols taking each their form
 Awhile they halted, and in silence paused.
 O muse of Pegasus, who genius 82
 Dost glorify and crown with lasting fame,
 As if through thee for realms and cities doth,
 With thine own self enlighten me, that now, 85
 As I conceived them, I may trace their forms :
 In these brief verses thine own powers display.
 Vowels and consonants appeared to me 88
 In numbers seven times five ; and I marked off ;
 The several parts, as into words they grouped.
Diligite Justitiam were first 91
 The verb and noun of all depicted there :
Qui judicatis terram were the last.
 And then within the M of the fifth word 94
 Remained they in order, so that Jove
 Shone there in silver, crossed, with lines of gold.
 And other Lights I saw descending on 97
 The head of M, and there repose, I trow,
 Singing the Good, Who draws them to Himself.
 And next, as when we stir up burning logs, 100
 There upward fly innumerable sparks,

Whereby fools are accustomed to divine,
 More than a thousand Lights appeared from thence 103
 To rise and higher mount, some more, some less,
 As did the Sun allot, Who kindles them.
 And as each calmly its position took, 106
 I saw an eagle's head and neck emerge,
 Presented plainly in its separate fire.
 He, Who is there the Painter, hath no guide, 109
 Is His own Guide, of Whom the instinct that
 Constructs the bird's nest a remembrance is.
 The other blessèd group, that seemed at first 112
 Content like lilies to entwine the M,
 By a slight movement filled the outline up.
 Sweet Star what jewels, and how great, showed me 115
 That all our justice is the sole effect
 Of th' Heav'n, wherein thou art the shining gem.
 Wherefore I pray the Mind, wherein begin 118
 Thy motion and thy force, that It take note
 Whence the smoke comes, that overcasts thy rays ;
 So yet again Its Wrath may be aroused 121
 'Gainst those, who in the Temple buy and sell,
 That first was reared mid Blood and martyrdoms.
 Soldiers of heaven, whom here I contemplate, 124
 Send forth your prayers for those upon our earth,
 All, after ill example gone astray.
 Men used of old in war to fight with swords, 127
 But now 'tis waged by seizing here and there
 The Bread a pitying Father bars to none.
 But thou, who writest only to cancel, 130
 In mind bethink thee Peter lives, and Paul,
 Who, for the vine thou rootest up, once died.
 Well can'st thou say ; " So fixed my longing is 133
 On him, who chose the solitary's life,
 And by a dancer's art was led to death,
 That nought know I of Fisherman or Paul." 136

CANTO XIX.

*Sixth Heaven of Jove—Princes Wise and Just—The Eagle
speaks—Necessity of Faith—Divine Justice Inscrutable—
Faith and Works.*

BEFORE me on extended wings was seen
 The fair presentment which those spirits made,
 As in their garland groups they sweetly joyed.
 Each like a little ruby, whereon gleamed 4
 A sunbeam, burned with so intense a fire,
 The Sun itself seemed on mine eyes to flash.
 And what it now behoves me to pourtray, 7
 No voice e'er told, nor ever ink did write,
 Nor force of fancy in its range e'er catch.
 For I did see the beak in act of speech, 10
 And heard its voice in sound say "I" and "My,"
 Which as in thought conceived was "We" and "Our."
 And it began: "In that I was both just 13
 And dutiful, am I exalted here
 To glory, which no longing may surpass;
 And left on earth remembrance of me such 16
 That even ill disposèd men below
 Commend it, though they let its record pass."
 As out of many brands one single heat 19
 Makes itself felt, so from the many loves
 Within that image issued that one voice;
 And straightway I: "O ye perpetual flowers 22
 Of Joy eternal, who unto my sense
 Make all your perfumes seem as only one;
 With breathèd words dispense this tedious fast, 25
 Wherein long time have I been famishing,
 Not finding for it any food on earth.
 Full well I know, if in another realm 28

Of heaven, God's Justice hath its mirror set,
 In this of yours 'tis seen without a veil.
 Ye know how readily attentive I 31
 As listener am ; ye know the doubt too, which
 Hath of old kept me in a lengthened fast " "
 E'en as the falcon from her hood released, 34
 Doth shake her head, with wing approval show,
 Display her instinct and her bravery vaunt,
 So did I see that Symbol woven with 37
 Praises of Grace Divine, break forth in songs,
 Which all know well, whoe'er on high rejoice.
 Then it began : " He, Who His compass turned 40
 To the world's farthest bound, and there marked off
 So much that's hidden, and so much that's clear,
 Could not imprint His Power Almighty so 43
 On the whole universe, that His own Word
 Should not abide in infinite excess :
 And this shows plainly how that first proud sprite, 46
 Who of all creatures was the masterpiece,
 By not awaiting light, fell immature,
 And hence the lesser natures are each found 49
 A vessel all too narrow for that Good,
 Which hath no end, and measures Self in Self.
 It follows hence, our vision, which must be 52
 One of the rays proceeding from the Mind,
 Wherewith all things existent are fulfilled,
 Cannot so powerful in its nature be, 55
 But that its Origin should much discern
 Remoter far than our phenomena.
 Wherefore perceptions in your world received 58
 The depth of sempiternal Justice reach,
 Only as eye can penetrate the sea,
 Which, while ashore the bottom it discerns, 61
 In the mid ocean sees it not, and yet
 'Tis there, though buried in profundity.
 Light there is none, save coming from that Calm 64
 Which never is perturbed ; nay, darkness 'tis,

- The shadow or the poison of the flesh.
 But duly open'd now the hiding place, 67
 Where Living Justice was from thee conceal'd,
 Whereof so many questions thou hast put.
 Thou said'st : A man is born upon the banks 70
 Of Indus, where is none who telleth him of Christ,
 Nor any who doth read or write of Him ;
 His every wish and all his actions are 73
 Good, far as human judgment can discern,
 Faultless alike in practice and in word ;
 But unbaptized he dies, without the Faith ; 76
 Where is the Justice that condemneth him ?
 Wherein his sin, if he do not believe ?
 But who art thou that on the bench would'st sit, 79
 And at the distance of a thousand miles,
 Judge with short sight that reacheth but a span ?
 Certes, to one who subtilities would weave 82
 With me, if over you were Scripture not
 Outspread, for doubting there'd be wond'rous room.
 O creatures of brute earth, O carnal minds ! 85
 The Primal Will, which in Itself is good,
 From Self, the Chiefest Good, hath never moved.
 That which with It accords, alone is just ; 88
 The goodness of no creature draws It forth,
 But rather by Its Ray is this evoked."
 As wheels the stork in circles overhead 91
 Above her nest, when she hath fed her brood,
 And each well satisfied looks up at her,
 E'en so like her, (and so I raised my brow) 94
 The blessed Image into motion stirr'd
 Its wings, as prompted by the vast conclave.
 Wheeling around, it said in song : " Such as 97
 To thee my notes, by thee ill understood,
 To mortals such E'ternal Judgment is."
 When in repose once more the lucent fires 100
 Of th' Holy Ghost were stilled upon the Sign,
 Which won for Rome the reverence of the world,

It once again began : " Unto this realm	103
None ever rose, who had not faith in Christ,	
Before or since He to the Tree was nailed.	
But lo ! how many cry " O Christ, O Christ,"	106
Who will in Judgment be far less near Him	
Than one, who never knew the Name of Christ.	
Such Christians will by Æthiop be condemned,	109
When the two flocks shall be divided off,	
The one for ever rich, the other poor,	
What will the Persians say unto your kings,	112
When they shall see the volume open laid,	
Wherein is writ the tale of their disgrace ?	
There shall be seen on roll of Albert's deeds	115
The act, which soon the pen will register,	
That into desert turns the realm of Prague.	
There shall be seen distress upon the Seine,	118
That he brings in by falsifying coin,	
Who soon shall perish by the wild boar's tusk.	
There shall be seen the thirsty pride that goads	121
The Scot and Englishman to madness such,	
That his own bound'ries neither can content.	
There shall be seen the soft luxurious lives	124
Of him of Spain, and the Bohemian,	
Who valour never knew, nor wished to know.	
Seen too the Cripple of Jerusalem ;	127
His roll of virtues all summed up in <i>I</i> ,	
Their opposites in number marked by <i>M</i> .	
And seen as well the greed and cowardice	130
Of him, the guardian of the Isle of Fire,	
Where his protracted life Anchises closed ;	
And to express how pitiful he is,	133
Contracted letters shall sufficient be,	
Much to record in their brief chronicle.	
And to all men the foul deeds shall appear	136
Of uncle and of brother, who defamed	
A noble lineage, and two crowns disgraced.	
And he of Portugal, Norway as well,	139

Shall there be known ; the man of Rascia too,
Who in ill hour sighted Venetia's coin.
O happy Hungary, if no longer left 142
To evil rule ! and happy too Navarre,
If self protected by her girdling hills !
And everyone must hold in pledge of this, 145
That Nicosia now and Famagosta
Bewail and curse the rule of their wild beast,
That from the other beasts departeth not. 148

CANTO XX.

*Sixth Heaven of Jove—Princes Wise and Just—Hymn of
the Just—Just Princes in the Eagle—Faith and Salvation—
Mystery of Predestination.*

WHEN he, who all the world illuminates,
 Below our hemisphere so far descends,
 That on all sides the daylight fades away,
 The sky, which he alone had lighted up, 4
 Doth suddenly a new aspect present
 With many lights, reflections all of one.
 This movement in the sky came to my mind, 7
 When th' ensign of the world, and its heroes
 Within the blessed beak silent remained ;
 For then those living Lights together all, 10
 The while they brighter glowed, began their songs,
 Fleeting and fading from my memory.
 O gentle love, that mantlest thee in smiles, 13
 What glow was thine, displayed in those sweet notes,
 Which inspiration drew from holy thoughts.
 And when those precious and translucent gems, 16
 That I beheld studding the sixth bright orb,
 In silence closed their peal of angel chimes,
 Meseemed to hear the murmuring of a stream, 19
 That falls transparent down from rock to rock,
 Showing th' abundance of its upper spring ;
 And as the sound from cithern at the neck 22
 Takes there its tone, or as with rustic pipe
 The passing air shapes at the vent its note,
 So with no tedium of expectancy, 25
 Did that deep murmuring through the eagle rise
 Up through the neck, as 'twere a hollow tube :
 There into voice it shaped, and issued prompt, 28

Forth from its beak, in form of words such as
 The heart awaited, where I wrote them down.
 "The part in me that sees, which on the sun 31
 Eagles of earth can fix unmoved, claims, now."
 So the address began, "thy stedfast gaze.
 For of the fires, whereby my form is traced, 34
 Those, whence the eye doth sparkle in my head,
 Are the supreme of all their various grades :
 He in the midst, as pupil gleaming forth, 37
 The Psalmist of the Holy Spirit was,
 Who through successive cities bare the ark.
 Now knoweth he the merit of his song, 40
 So far as 'twas the work of his own plan,
 In a reward proportioned to its worth.
 Of five, who of the eyebrow form the curve, 43
 He, who is stationed nearest to my beak,
 Did the poor widow for her son console :
 Now knoweth he how dear a loss it is 46
 Not to be Christ's disciple, by the proof
 Of this sweet life and of its opposite.
 He who comes next on the circumference 49
 Whereof I speak, along its rising arc,
 By true repentance respite gained from death.
 Eternal Judgment now he knows unchanged, 52
 Abideth still, when worthy prayers down there
 Shift till to-morrow what is due to-day.
 The next who follows, with a good intent 55
 That ill fruit bore with law and me, became,
 To give the Shepherd place, himself a Greek.
 Now knoweth he, how evil, though deduced 58
 From his good works, no evil works for him,
 Albeit a world's destruction thence ensue.
 And he, whom on the sloping curve thou seest, 61
 Was William, whom that country now deploras, [groans:
 Which, while they live, 'neath Charles and Frederick
 Now knoweth he how heaven doth dearly love 64
 A righteous King, and this he manifests

Still in the radiance that he flasheth forth. 67
 Who in the erring world below would think
 That in this circle Trojan Ripheus should
 Be of these holy Lights himself the fifth?
 Now knoweth he much more than what the world 70
 Is able to discern of grace divine,
 Though e'en his vision may not guage its depth."
 Like to the lark which freely soars in space 73
 With song at first, and then in silence drops,
 Content and sated with its last sweet trill,
 Such seemed to me that image, imprint of 76
 Th' Eternal Pleasure, in desire of Whom
 Each thing becomes that which it really is.
 And notwithstanding I was to my doubt 79
 Almost as glass to colour which it clothes,
 Delay in silence I could not endure, [bursts,
 But from my mouth, "What things are these?" forth 82
 Thrust by the force of its oppressive weight :
 Whereat I saw high jubilee of fires.
 Then quick with eye kindling in brighter glow, 85
 The blessed Sign to me in answer said,
 Not to detain me wondering in suspense :
 "I see that thou believest in these things, 88
 Because I tell thee, but seest not the how :
 So, though believed, hidden they still remain.
 Thou art as one, who by its name a thing 91
 Well apprehendeth, but its *quiddity*
 Sees not, if by another not drawn out.
Regnum Calorum suffereth violence 94
 By fervent love and by a vivid hope,
 Whereby the Will Divine is vanquishèd ;
 Not in the way that man subdueth man, 97
 But conquered, since the conquest is His Will,
 And conquer'd, conquers by benignity.
 The first life of the eyebrow and the fifth 100
 With wonder fill thee, since thou seest with them
 The habitation of the Angels decked.

- Not Gentiles, as thou deem'st, but Christians both 103
 Died in firm faith in those Blest Feet, which had
 Bled for the one, and should for th' other bleed.
- For one of them from hell, where never man 106
 Regains good will, did to his bones come back ;
 And this of lively hope was the reward ;
- I say of lively hope that flung its force 109
 So mightily in prayer on God to raise
 Him up, that it prevailed to move God's Will.
- The glorious soul, concerning whom we speak, 112
 To flesh returning only for a while,
 Believed in Him, Who could afford it help,
- And thus believing, kindled in such fire 115
 Of truest love, that at his second death
 Worthy was he to join this festival.
- The other by the Grace, which from a fount 118
 So deep wells up, that no created thing
 With eye hath ever reached its primal source,
- Set his whole love below on righteousness ; 121
 Wherefore from Grace to Grace God openèd
 His eyes to our Redemption yet to come :
- So in it he believed, and brooked no more 124
 The ill disfavour of the Pagan life,
 And the perverted ways of men rebuked.
- More than ten ages ere Baptismal days 127
 To him for Baptism those Ladies three
 Were giv'n, whom at the right wheel thou didst see.
- Predestination ! ah ! how far removed 130
 Thy root doth lie from speculations such
 As see not fully the First cause of all !
- And mortals, hold yourselves straitly restrained 133
 In judging ; for e'en we, who see God's Face,
 Know not as yet the number of the Elect.
- And ah ! how sweet is this defect of ours ! 136
 For our good is in this good perfected,
 That what God willeth is our own will too."
- Thus by that image in its form divine, 139

To clear the short range of my visual sense,
Was this sweet medicine administered.
And as with songman good the harper good 142
Makes the vibration of his strings agree,
Whereby the song is more delectable,
So while he spake, my memory recalls 145
How I beheld those two most favoured lights,
Just as the eyelids close in unison,
Beat with their flamelets to the words in time. 148

CANTO XXI.

*The Heaven of Saturn—Spirits of Contemplation—Ascent
into the Seventh Heaven—The Celestial Stair—Pier
Damiano—Luxury of Prelates Denounced.*

MINE eyes were fixed already once again
 Upon my Lady's face, my soul with them
 From all attention else wholly withdrawn ;
 And she smiled not, but : " If I were to smile," 4
 So she began, " None other would'st thou be,
 Than Semele, when she to ashes turned.
 Because my beauty, as it mounts the stair 7
 Of the Eternal Palace, brighter burns,
 As thou hast seen, the higher its ascent ;
 And if not tempered, in such splendour glows, 10
 That in its flash thy mortal faculties
 Would shattered be, as branch by thunderbolt
 We to the seventh glory have been raised, 13
 Which underneath the fiery Lion's breast,
 Mingled with his, now shoots its virtue down.
 Fix now thy mind in sequence of thine eyes, 16
 And of them make thee mirrors for the form,
 Which in this mirror will appear to thee."
 Whoso could know the feast of vision I 19
 Found in the sight of that blest countenance,
 Would, as I turned me to another care,
 Know well the happiness it was to me 22
 To yield obedience to my heavenly guide,
 One side against the other balanced thus.
 Within the crystal, which, as it revolves 25
 Around the world, bears its bright leader's name,

Beneath whose sway all wickedness lay dead,
 Coloured like gold whereon a sunbeam falls, 28
 A ladder I beheld, that reached aloft.
 So high, my vision could not follow it :
 Adown its steps also I saw descend 31
 Splendours so many, that I deemed all light
 Seen in the sky must needs from thence pour down.
 And as by habit of their nature led, 34
 The daws together at the break of day
 Fly to and fro their shiv'ring plumes to warm,
 And some go off with no sign of return, 37
 Others turn back to their first starting place,
 And others tarry, wheeling round and round,
 Such seemed to me was there the mode, in which 40
 That sparkling cloud in company approached,
 Soon as it lighted on a certain step ;
 And one that kept the nearest unto us, 43
 Shone forth so brightly, that I said in thought :
 " I well discern thou show'st the sign of love ;"
 But she, from whom I wait the how and when 46
 To speak, or silence keep, pauseth ; and I,
 Against my wish, do well and nothing ask.
 When she my attitude of silence saw 49
 I'th' sight of Him, by Whom all things are seen,
 She said to me : " Let loose thy fervent wish."
 And I began : " No merit of my own 52
 Makes me deserving of reply from thee ;
 But for her sake, who gives me leave to ask,
 O happy soul, hid in the deep abode 55
 Of thine own joy, make known to me the cause,
 That placeth thee so closely at my side ;
 And tell me, why within this sphere is hushed 58
 The dulcet symphony of Paradise,
 Which through the rest below devoutly sounds."
 " Thou hast the ear of mortal, as the eye," 61
 It answered ; " here no song is heard, just as
 No smile from Beatrice is vouchsafed here.

- Adown the steps of this most holy stair 64
 I came thus far only to welcome thee
 With words, and with the light that mantleth me.
 No greater love sent me in greater haste ; 67
 For love as much and more gloweth up there,
 As this fire-flashing manifests to thee ;
 But the deep charity that prompts us all 70
 To serve the Counsel that directs the world,
 As thou dost see, allots our duties here.”
 “I see it well,” I said, “O sacred Lamp, 73
 How Love left free sufficeth in these courts
 For service of Eternal Providence.
 But what to me seems hard to understand 76
 Is, why thou only ’mong thy comrades here
 Hast to this service been predestinate.”
 Nor had I reached as yet my final word, 79
 Ere its mid point the Light a centre made,
 Whirling around it like a swift millstone.
 Then answer made the love which dwelt within : 82
 “Divine Light centres on me from above,
 Entering by this in which I am enclosed ;
 Whereof the virtue, with my sight conjoined, 85
 Exalts me, ’bove myself, to where I see
 The Supreme Essence, whence its milk is drawn.
 Hence comes the mirthfulness, that feeds my flame, 88
 Because to what I see, far as ’tis clear,
 The brightness of my fire I equalize.
 But not the soul in Heaven that brightest shines, 91
 Nor Seraph fixed in nearest gaze on God,
 Could satisfaction give to thy demand ;
 For what thou askest lies so far deep down 94
 In the abyss of the Eternal Law,
 That from created vision ’tis cut off.
 And thou returning to the mortal world, 97
 This carry back, that none may there presume
 Toward such a mark again to move his foot.
 The mind here radiant doth on earth give smoke ; 100

Consider how can it do that below,
 If when in Heaven received, 'tis impotent."
 Such limitation by these words imposed, 103
 I left my question, and fell merely back
 In all humility to ask his name,
 "'Tween the two shores of Italy there rise 106
 Cliffs, not far distant from thy home, so high
 Their summits leave the thunder oft below :
 They form a hump, which men call Catria ; 109
 Beneath it lies a holy hermitage,
 That is for worship only set apart."
 Thus he began his third address to me : 112
 And added furthermore : "'Twas there that I
 In service bound myself to God so close,
 Seasoning my food with olive juice alone, 115
 That with light heart I passed through heat and cold,
 Contented well in thought contemplative.
 In those days to this heaven that cloister gave 118
 A plenteous harvest ; now 'tis barren grown,
 And soon 'twere meet that this should be exposed.
 As Peter Damiano there I dwelt ; 121
 Known as Peccator on the Adrian shore,
 When there an inmate in our Lady's house.
 Little of mortal life remained to me, 124
 When I was called, nay dragged, to wear the hat,
 Which ever passeth from the bad to worse.
 Came Cephas once, the Chosen Vessel came 127
 Of th' Holy Ghost, in fastings and barefoot,
 The food sufficient any shelter gave.
 A beadle now on each side must support 130
 Our shepherds of to-day ; one leads in front,
 And one, so burly they, supports behind.
 Their flowing robes cover their palfreys' backs ; 133
 So move they on, two beasts beneath one hide.
 O Patience, that all this must tolerate !"
 I saw at these words fires more numerous 136
 From step to step descend and whirl around,

And at each whirl still fairer shone they forth.
About him these collecting halted there, 139
And raised a shout sonorous and so loud,
That no similitude could here be found :
Stunned by its thunder, I its purport missed. 142

CANTO XXII.

Seventh Heaven of Saturn—Spirits of Contemplation.

S. Benedict—Monastic Corruption—Eighth Heaven of Fixed Stars—Sign of Gemini—View of Planets and the Earth.

CONFOUNDED, in amazement, to my guide
 I turned me, as the little one that runs
 Ever to her, in whom he most confides ;
 And she, as mother, who with succour prompt 4
 Hastes to her breathless, pallor-stricken boy,
 With tones familiar of encouragement,
 Said : “ Know’st thou not that here in heav’n thou art ? 7
 And know’st thou not that heav’n all holy is,
 And all done here, cometh of righteous zeal ?
 What change in thee the song would have produced, 10
 Or by my smile should I, thou now canst judge,
 Since their shout only hath perturbed thee thus ;
 Wherein hadst thou but understood their prayers, 13
 Already hadst thou known the avenging doom,
 Which ere thou die, thine eyes shall yet behold.
 The sword above us here smites not in haste, 16
 Nor with delay, save in the view of him,
 Who with desire or fear awaits its fall.
 But now elsewhere turn thee to something else ; 19
 For many glorious spirits wilt thou see,
 If as I bid thee, thou look round again.”
 As she would have it, so I set mine eyes, 22
 And hundreds saw of little spheres, that each
 With mutual rays their glory magnified.
 Like one I stood, who in himself subdues 25
 The goad of strong desire, and ventures not
 To ask, fearing in speech to go too far :
 In front of me did then of all those pearls 28

The largest and most lucent place itself,
 Itself to satisfy my full desire ;
 And from within I heard : " If thou couldst see, 31
 As I, the charity that glows in us,
 Thine inner thoughts expression would have found ;
 But that expectancy detain thee not 34
 Too long from thy high aim, answer I make
 E'en to the thought thou cherishest within.
 The mountain, on whose slope Casino stands, 37
 Was once frequented on its very top
 By men deceived and ill disposed in mind ;
 And I am he, who up there carried first 40
 The Name of Him, who to the earth brought down
 The truth, that lifts us to these heights sublime ;
 And over me such beams of grace shone forth, 43
 That I the neighbouring villages drew back
 From th' impious worship that seduced the world.
 These other fires were men devoted all 46
 To contemplation, with the warmth inflamed
 That maketh flowers and holy fruits spring up.
 Here is Maccario, Romualdo here ; 49
 Here are my brothers, in the cloisters who
 Kept sure their foothold, and made fast the heart."
 And I to him ; " The love that thou dost show 52
 With me in converse, and the kindly mien
 Which I observe and note in all your fires,
 Have in me so enlargèd confidence, 55
 E'en as the sunshine makes the rose expand
 In open bloom, wide as its powers allow.
 Wherefore I pray, and, Father, assure me, 58
 If grace so great I may receive, that I
 May see thine own true form with open face."
 " Brother," he said, " this high desire of thine 61
 Shall be fulfilled above in the last sphere,
 Where are fulfilled all other and my own.
 Perfected there, completed and mature 64
 Is every yearning found : therein alone

Each part abides, where it hath ever been ;
 It knows not space, nor turneth it on poles ; 67
 And this our ladder passeth into it,
 And so beyond thy vision vanisheth.
 Upward so high Jacob, the Patriarch, 70
 Beheld it once its utmost summit rear,
 When it appeared laden with Angel throngs.
 But to rise there no man doth now uplift 73
 A foot from earth ; the charter of my Rule
 Remains below, its pages left to waste.
 The walls, which used an Abbey to be held, 76
 Are dens of thieves, and the monks' cowls become
 Sacks linèd well with store of worthless meal.
 But crushing usury lifts no such front 79
 Against God's ordinance, as doth the fruit,
 Which with its madness fills the heart of monks.
 For whatso'er the Church doth hold in trust, 82
 Is for the folk, who beg in name of God,
 And not for kinsmen, nor for something worse.
 The flesh of mortals is so soft that no 85
 Mere good beginning can below last out
 From germ of sapling to the acorn age.
 No gold nor silver Peter had at first ; 88
 With prayer and fasting I began ; Francis
 His convent laid in deep humility ;
 And if thou think of each as he began, 91
 And see since then, whither our line has swerved,
 Thou'lt see our whiteness hath grown somewhat brown.
 And yet forsooth, Jordan in backward course, 94
 And sea retreating at the Will of God
 Were wonders greater than a rescue here."
 So spake he ; then his company he joined ; 97
 His comrades gathered close to him around,
 And like a whirlwind swept they all aloft.
 My Lady Dear by force of sign alone 100
 Up by that stair drew me to follow them,
 My nature by her virtue thus o'erruled.

- And ne'er below by natural rise or fall, 103
 Was a velocity of motion known
 That with the movement of my flight could vie.
 Reader! as I may yet return to that 106
 Triumphant holiness, for which ofttimes
 I mourn my sins, and smite upon my breast,
 Not with such speed hadst thou thy finger placed 109
 In flame and snatched it back, as I beheld
 The sign that follows Taurus,—and went in.
 O Glorious Stars, O Constellation big 112
 With mighty virtue, whence I recognize
 All genius of my own, be't what it may,
 With you was dawning and with you did set 115
 He, who is Father of all mortal life,
 What time I first drew breath from Tuscan air.
 And then, when came largess of grace to me 118
 To enter the high sphere, wherein ye wheel,
 Your region was allotted unto me.
 To you in sighs of aspiration now 121
 Turneth my soul for virtue to achieve
 The arduous pass, that draws it to itself.
 "Thou art so near Salvation's final goal." 124
 So Beatrice began, "that here thou wilt
 A vision need, clear and acute withal.
 And therefore, ere thou enter farther in, 127
 Look down, and see how vast the universe
 I have already set beneath thy feet ;
 So that thy heart to the triumphant throng, 130
 Which comes in joy through this ethereal sphere,
 May show itself exultant to the full."
 In backward glance o'er all the seven-told spheres 133
 I turned mine eyes ; and saw this globe of ours
 Such, that its mean appearance caused a smile :
 And that opinion I approve as best, 136
 Which takes of it least count ; and whoso sets
 His mind elsewhere, may be deemed truly wise.
 I saw Latona's daughter gleaming bright, 139

Without the shadow, that had caused me once
To think she was composed of dense and rare.
The aspect of thy son, Hyperion, 142
Here I could bear, and round and near to him,
I marked how Maia and Dione move ;
From thence appeared the tempering star of Jove, 145
'Twixt son and father ; and from thence were clear
To me the changed positions that they take,
And all the seven made quite plain to me 148
Their vast dimensions, at what speed impelled,
And how remote their situations are.
This little plat, which makes us all so proud, 151
As with the Eternal Twins I circled round,
Was seen spread out from hill top to the shore :
Back to the fair eyes then I turned mine own. 154

CANTO XXIII.

*The Eighth Heaven of the Fixed Stars. Spirits
Triumphant. Triumph of Christ and Coronation of Mary.*

E'EN as the bird amid the boughs she loves,
 Sitting upon the nest of her sweet brood
 The livelong night that hides all things from us,
 Who to behold the longed-for sight of them, 4
 And find the morsels needed for their meal,
 Where heavy toil to her is only joy,
 On open spray anticipates the time, 7
 And sunrise waits in ardent eagerness,
 Watching with steadfast gaze the birth of dawn,
 So was my Lady standing now erect; 10
 And in attention toward the quarter turn'd,
 'Neath which the sun seems to display least speed;
 And as I marked her longing and suspense, 13
 I was myself as one, who with desire
 For something yearns, and pays himself with hope.
 Brief was the interval 'tween either state, 16
 I mean of expectation, and the sight
 Of heav'n, as it brighter and brighter grew.
 "Behold the Legions," then said Beatrice, 19
 "Of Christ's high Triumph, and the harvest see,
 Ingathered by the circling of these spheres."
 It seemed to me her face was all aglow, 22
 And her eyes brimming with such happiness,
 As needs must be without description left.
 As in the calm serene of the full moon 25
 Smiles Trivia 'mid the everlasting nymphs,
 Who in its every nook bedeck the sky,
 So did I see, above ten thousand lamps, 28
 One Sun, which did illumine the host of them,

E'en as our own the stars above our heads ;
 And through the living light transparent shone 31
 The lucent Substance of a glory such
 As my own powers of sight could not endure.
 "O Beatrice, sweet guide, beloved of me!" 34
 When she broke in : "That which o'erwhelms thee now,
 A Virtue is, from which is no retreat.
 Here is the Wisdom, and the Power here 37
 That open'd wide 'tween Heaven and earth the road,
 For which long time men yearnèd in desire."
 As fire, imprisoned in a cloud, bursts forth 40
 In self expansion, and demands more space,
 And counter to its nature falls to earth,
 E'en so my soul 'mid this delightful feast, 43
 Expanding in its range passed beyond self,
 And what befell it, can no more recall.
 "Now ope thine eyes, and see me as I am ; 46
 Things thou hast seen, whereby thou art become
 Able to bear the radiance of my smile."
 I was as one, who of forgotten dream 49
 Feels himself conscious, and ransacks his brain
 In vain to call it back to memory,
 When this appeal I heard, which merits well 52
 A gratitude, that from the book shall nought
 Erase, that seals the record of the past.
 If now should sound together all the tongues 55
 That Polyhymnia and her sisters e'er
 With sweetest milk in most abundance fed,
 To help me sing the saintly smile, and how 58
 It made the saintly face pure light itself,
 Not to a thousandth of the Truth 'twould mount.
 So then while representing Paradise, 61
 Needs must the sacred poem take a leap,
 As doth a man that finds his road cut off.
 But who bethinks him of the weighty theme, 64
 The shoulder mortal too that bears the load,
 Should blame it not if stagg'ring under this ;

- No passage this for a mere cockle shell, 67
 Through which my daring prow now cleaves its way,
 Nor for a helmsman lolling at his ease.
- “ Why doth my face enchant thee thus with love, 70
 That to the beauteous garden thou turn not,
 Which 'neath the beams of Christ now bursts in bloom?
 Here is the Rose, wherein the Word Divine 73
 Our Flesh became, and here the lilies are,
 Which traced the good way by their sweet perfume.”
- Thus Beatrice ; and I to her advice 76
 Eager to yield, gave up myself again
 To brave the struggle of my feeble eyes.
- As 'neath a sunbeam, streaming down direct 79
 From broken cloud, mine eyes ere now have seen,
 Sheltered themselves in shade, a field of flowers,
 So saw I yet more hosts resplendent still, 82
 'Neath ardent rays down flashing from on high,
 And yet discerned not whence the radiance came.
- Virtue benign, whose mark on these is stamped, 85
 Thou didst uplift Thyself to give mine eyes
 Scope to see there, what they'd been weak to catch.
- The name of that fair flower, which I invoke 88
 Morning and evening, held me there enthralled
 In soul, contemplating the Chiefest Fire.
- And as on both mine eyes the living star 91
 In quality and size its image flashed,
 That triumphs there as erst it triumphed here,
 Athwart the heaven down came a little torch 94
 Formed like a ring and fashioned as a crown,
 That wreathed about her, and then circled round.
- What melody soe'er sounds sweetest here 97
 Below, and to itself attracts the soul,
 Would seem like burst of cloud in thunder crash,
 If with the strains of that sweet lyre compared, 100
 Mid which the Sapphire fair was there encrowned,
 Whose azure makes the Sapphire Heav'n more blue.
- “ Angelic Love am I, Who hover round 103

- That Joy sublime, which from the Womb exhales
 That was the Hostelry of our Desire ;
- And o'er Thee will I hover, heavenly Queen, 106
 Till to thy Son thou come, and thine entrance
 Shall make the Sphere Supreme diviner still."
- Thus did the music as it circled round, 109
 Seal up its final strain, and Mary's name
 Shouted the other lights in one acclaim.
- The regal mantle, which the rolling spheres 112
 Of all the world enfolds, and liveth most,
 And gloweth most in God's own breath and laws,
 Held over us its inner lining so 115
 Outstretched in distance that its presence e'en,
 Where yet I stood, reached far beyond my sight.
- And thus mine eyes had not the potency 118
 To follow in its course the crownèd flame,
 Which in its Offspring's wake went up on high.
- And as a sucking child to mother turns 121
 Its outspread arms, when it her milk has drawn,
 Inflamed by love to show an outward sign,
- Each of those glistening spirits upward shot 124
 Its point of fire, so that to me was plain,
 How strong to Mary their affection was.
- And there they halted still within my view, 127
 Singing *Regina Cæli* in such strains,
 That never hath their sweetness passed from me.
- Oh ! the abundance of the harvest here 130
 Pressed down in the rich coffers, that on earth
 Had been in seedtime worthy husbandmen !
- Here life and joy are in the treasure found, 133
 Which was their gain, when mourning exiles once
 In Babylon, they left its gold untouched.
- Here in his triumph 'neath th' Exalted Son 136
 Of God and Mary in his victory,
 Amid the councils old and new alike,
 Sits he who of this Glory holds the keys. 139

CANTO XXIV.

*Eighth Heaven of the Fixed Stars—Spirits Triumphant—
S. Peter—Dante's Examination in the Faith.*

“O BAND of Fellows, to the supper called
Of the Blest Lamb, Who all of you so feeds
That every wish is ever satisfied,
If by God's Grace this man a foretaste hath 4
Of that which from your table falleth down,
Ere yet the day that death prescribes for him,
Attention give to his boundless desire ; 7
Bedew somewhat his thirst : ye ever drink
From that fount, whence flows what he hath in thought.”
Thus Beatrice : and then those happy sprites 10
Made themselves spheres, revolving round fixed poles,
Forth flashing, comet like, their mighty flames.
And as in clocks the wheels co-ordinate 13
Move round, so that the one we first observe
Seems to stand still, and the last seems to fly,
So did those circling bands in festive dance, 16
Some swift in motion, and some slow, help me
To estimate their wealth of happiness.
Forth from one group I noted as most fair, 19
I saw a flame emerge in happiness,
Such as left none more brilliant than itself ;
And three times did it wheel round Beatrice 22
With song of so divine a strain, that fails
My power of fancy to recall its notes ;
So my pen skips it, and I write it not ; 25
To paint such folds imagination e'en,
Not to say words, hath colours all too crude.
“O Sainly Sister mine, who prayest me 28
Devoutly thus, by this thy fervant prayer

Thou dost detach me from yon beauteous sphere." 31
 Soon as the blessed flame its movement ceased,
 Unto my Lady it breathed forth in voice.
 That spake the words, as I have set them down.
 And she : " Eternal Light of the great man, 34
 Under whose charge our Lord did leave the keys,
 That He brought down, of this our wondrous Joy,
 Prove now this man with easy points and hard, 37
 As seems thee best, concerning the true Faith,
 In strength whereof thou on the sea didst walk.
 If He love well, Hope well, in Creed be sound, 40
 From thee 'tis not concealed, since there thine eye
 Doth reach, where in true colour all is seen.
 But as this realm its citizens enrols 43
 On their true faith, its glory to enhance,
 'Tis well it fall to him to speak thereof."
 As silently the bachelor prepares, 46
 Until the master puts his question forth,
 Not to determine, but to argue it ;
 So with all reasoning I equipped myself, 49
 The while she spake, to be in readiness
 At once for questions and profession such.
 " Good Christian speak : show plainly what thou art : 52
 Say what is Faith?" whereon I raised my brow [breathed :
 Towards that Light, from whence these words were
 And unto Beatrice I turned, and she 55
 Gave me prompt signs, that I the waters should
 Let loose abroad forth from my fount within.
 " May that grace, which permits me to confess," 58
 'Gan I, " before our chief Centurion,
 Explicit make th' expression of my thoughts."
 And I went on : " Father, thy Brother dear, 61
 Who with thee set Rome in the line of Truth,
 Wrote thus for us with his veracious pen ;
 Faith is the substance of things hopèd for, 64
 The evidence of things as yet unseen :
 And this appears to me its *quiddity*."

- Then did I hear : " Right thine opinion is, 67
 If understanding well, why he set Faith
 'Mid substances and then with evidence."
- And I forthwith : " The truths profound, which here 70
 Make of their presence a free gift to me,
 Are hid so far away from eyes below,
 That their existence is but on belief ; 73
 On which foundation rests the lofty Hope,
 And the idea of substance thus comes in :
 And from this credence it becomes us well 76
 With nothing more in sight to syllogize,
 And so comes next th' idea of Evidence."
- Again I heard : " If whatsoe'er below 79
 Is gained as doctrine were thus understood,
 The sophist's wit would there be out of place."
- Thus did that burning Love breathe out its thought ; 82
 And added then : " Right good by assay now
 Is passed this coinage in alloy and weight ;
 But tell me if in thine own purse 't is found." 85
 Then said I : " Yes, so round and bright it is,
 That nothing in its image hints *perhaps*."
- Then forth at once from out the depth of Light 88
 Resplendent there, was heard : " This precious gem,
 Whereon the structure of all virtue rests,
 Whence hadst thou it ?" Then I : " The copious shower 91
 Of Holy Ghost, which sheds itself abroad
 Upon the parchments, old as well as new,
 A syllogism is, which this for me 94
 Concludes with keenness such, that before it
 All demonstration seems to lose its point."
- I further heard ; " The propositions, which, 97
 Both old and new, to this conclusion lead,
 Why deem'st thou these an utterance divine ?"
 And I : " The proof, which opes this Truth to me 100
 Are the works consequent, for which nature
 Never forged iron, nor upon anvil smote."
 " And say," he added, " who assures thee then, 103

- That these deeds e'er were done? The very thing,
That needs be proved, alone swears to their truth." 106
- "If the world turned to Christianity," 106
Said I, "without a miracle, this one
Is such, the rest are not its hundredth part.
For thou, hungry and poor, didst enter in 109
Upon a field to sow the good seed there.
Which once grew up a vine, a bramble now."
This ended, the exalted court of Saints 112
Through all the spheres rang a *Te Deum* out
In melodies such as above are sung.
And that great Lord, who in his scrutiny 115
Had led me, as it were, from branch to branch,
Until we now approached the topmost spray,
Again began: "The Grace which tenderly 118
Doth woo thy mind, hath opened now thy mouth
Thus far to speak, as it became thee best ;
So far what thou hast uttered I approve. 121
But now behoves it thee to state thy Creed,
And why 'twas offered unto thy belief."
"O Holy Father, Spirit, Who seest now 124
What erst thou so believedst, that towards
The tomb thou didst the younger feet outrun,"
So I began: "Thou wilt I here declare 127
The formal substance of my willing Faith ;
And more, the cause of it thoud'st further ask.
And I reply: In One God I believe, 130
Sole and Eternal, Who the whole heaven moves
With love and with desire, Himself unmoved.
And for this Faith I have not merely proof 133
In physics and in metaphysics, but
Truth gives it me, which hence is rainèd down
Through Moses, through the Prophets and through Psalms, 136
Through Gospel story, and through you, who wrote,
After the Spirit's Fire had made you blest.
In Three Eternal Persons I believe ; 139
One Essence I believe, One and Threefold,

So that in them are *Sunt* and *Est* conjoined.
Of this divine condition thus profound, 142
Whereof I speak, a seal upon my mind
Ofttimes the gospel doctrine doth impress.
This is the principle, and this the spark, 145
Which after into living fire expands,
And like a star in heaven shines forth in me."
As when the master hearing welcome news, 148
Embraces him, who brought the tidings in,
With grateful thanks soon as his tale is told,
E'en so with blessings chanted over me, 151
Soon as I ceased, the Apostolic Light
Three times encircled me, at Whose command
I'd said my say ; so well my say pleased Him. 154

CANTO XXV.

*Eighth Heaven of The Fixed Stars—Spirits Triumphant—
A Sigh for Home—S. James—Examination on Hope—
S. John—Heavenly Light overpowers the Terrestrial Eye.*

SHOULD it e'er hap this sacred Poem, which
 Both heaven and earth have taken so in hand,
 That it for many a year hath made me lean,
 Should tame the savag'ry that bars me out 4
 From the fair fold, where as a lamb I slept,
 Foe to the wolves that upon it wage war,
 With other voice and other fleece will I 7
 Return a Poet; and at Font where I
 Baptizèd was, will I my chaplet take;
 For there I entered on the Faith, which makes 10
 Our souls known unto God; and for its sake
 Did Peter after circle thus my brow.
 Toward us thereon there moved another Light 13
 Forth from the same sphere, whence had issued he,
 Whom Christ of all His vicars Primate left.
 Thereon my Lady, with great gladness filled, 16
 Cried: "Look, O look, the great lord comes, to whom
 The pilgrims of Galicia flock below."
 As when the dove beside its mate alights, 19
 And each to other, as they wheel around,
 And coo, makes manifest their mutual love,
 So of those glorious princes did I see 22
 With welcome each receive his great compeer,
 Lauding the banquet of the Saints on high.
 But when their greetings had been now exchanged, 25
 Silent each of them halted *coram me*,
 In glow of fire that bowed my face low down.
 Thereon with gracious smile said Beatrice: 28

- " World-famèd Life, by whom the wide largess
 Of this our Palace erst was written down,
 Make now these lofty heights resound with Hope ; 31
 Thou know'st that this thou representest oft
 As Jesus to the Three gave fullest light."
 " Lift up thy head, and fully be assured ; 34
 For all, who come from mortal world up here,
 Our rays must ripen to maturity."
 Such comfort reached me from the second Fire : 37
 And I did lift mine eyes unto those hills,
 Which had at first abashed them to the ground.
 " Since of His Grace our Sovran Lord doth will 40
 That ere thy death thou shouldest here confront
 In this most secret chamber all His lords ;
 So that the sight of this His very Court 43
 May strengthen thee and others in their Hope
 Of it, the source of all right Love below ;
 Say what it is, and how within thy soul 46
 It blooms ; and say too whence it came to thee."
 Thus did the second Light his speech pursue.
 And she, who in her mercy was the guide 49
 Of my wing's pinion through its lofty flight,
 With answer thus anticipated me :
 " No son of hers doth the Church Militant 52
 Possess of livelier hope, as in that Sun
 'Tis writ, who all our company illumines :
 Wherefore from Egypt is it granted him 55
 That he should come into Jerusalem,
 Ere yet his warfare is accomplishèd.
 The two remaining points, thou askest of, 58
 Not to learn aught thyself, but that he may
 Report, how pleasing to thee is this grace,
 I leave to him, for not to him will they 61
 Prove hard, nor boasting show ; let him reply,
 And God assist him with His grace therein."
 As the disciple, wherein he's expert, 64
 Answers the master willingly and prompt,

- That manifest may be his excellence ;
 "Hope is," said I, "the sure expectancy
 Of future glory : and the product too
 Of Grace divine, and previous desert. 67
- From many a star this Light descends on me ; 70
 But he instilled it first into my heart,
 Who the great songman was of the Great King.
- "Let all," as in God's Songbook may be read, 73
 "Put hope in Thee, who know Thy holy Name :"
 And this who knows not, if he have my Faith ?
- To his instilling thou didst more instil 76
 By thine Epistle, so am I full filled,
 And upon others shed your rain in turn."
- While thus I spake, within the living breast 79
 Of that great fire a flame was quivering.
 Sudden and oft, like play of lightning gleam.
- Then breathed a voice : "The Love wherewith I burn 82
 Towards this virtue still, which followed me
 E'en to the palm, and issue from the fight,
- Would have me breathe it thee again, that thou 85
 In it mayst joy ; and me 'twill pleasure much,
 If thou wilt say, what promise hope affords "
- And I : "The Scriptures, old and new, set up 88
 The Sign-post, which with finger points it me,
 Of souls, whom God hath called to be his friends,
- Isaiah saith, that each shall be arrayed 91
 In its own country in a two-told robe,
 And its own country is this happy life.
- This revelation too thy Brother makes 94
 Much clearer, and in better order set,
 There where he treateth of the white robed throng."
- At once, and close upon the ending of my words, 97
 Above our heads was heard, *Sperent in Te*,
 And all the choirs to this made full response :
- And then amidst them shone a light so clear, 100
 That if but one such crystal Cancer had,
 A winter's month would be one single day.

- And as a blithesome maid stands up, and moves, 103
 And mingles in the dance, only to pay
 Court to the bride, unconscious of herself,
 So did I see the unveiled splendour come 106
 Unto the twain, who wheeled in circles round
 In speed proportioned to their ardent love.
 Into their notes and words he threw himself ; 109
 And upon them my Lady fixed her gaze,
 E'en as a bride, silent and motionless.
 "'Tis he, who once upon the Breast reclined 112
 Of our own Pelican ; and he it was,
 Who on the Cross was to the high charge called."
 Thus spake my Lady, nor the more for this 115
 Moved she her eyes, in close attention rapt,
 After her words, as they had been afore.
 As one who looks and straineth with his eyes, 118
 And strives to see the sun when half eclipsed,
 And in his seeing loses sense of sight,
 Such was myself in presence of that fire, 121
 That last arrived, until was said : " Wherefore
 Thus blind thyself to see what is not here ?
 My flesh is earth in earth, and so will be 124
 With all the rest, until our number hath
 Made up the sum eternally decreed.
 In their two robes to cloister of the Blest 127
 Two Lights alone have thither made ascent ;
 And this unto your world shall you report."
 At these words halted then the whirling groups 130
 Of flame, and therewith ceased the melody,
 Formed in the concert of the trinal breath ;
 As when, fatigue or danger to avoid, 133
 The oars that whilom through the water clave,
 Halt easy all upon the whistle's sound.
 Ah ! the commotion of my mind how great, 136
 When as I turned to look on Beatrice,
 I could not see her, though I was the while
 Close by her side, and in the Happy Land. 139

CANTO XXVI.

*Eighth Heaven of The Fixed Stars—Spirits Triumphant—
Examination on Charity—Adam—The First Sin—The
First Exile—The First Language—The First Sojourn.*

WHILE still in doubt, if sight were wholly gone,
 From out the blaze that had extinguished it,
 There breathed a voice, which my attention fixed,
 And said: "Until thy vision is restored 4
 To thee, which thou in me hast burnèd up,
 'Tis well in converse thou find recompense.
 Begin then, and declare the point, which is 7
 Thy soul's true aim, and well assure thyself
 Thy sight is only dazzled, and not dead ;
 Because the Lady, who conducts thee through 10
 This realm divine hath in her glance the power,
 Which erst the hand of Ananias had."
 "As pleaseth her," said I, "or soon or late 13
 Be the eyes healed, that were the gates, through which
 She passed in fire where-with I ever burn.
 The Good, that with contentment fills this court, 16
 The *Alpha* is and *Omega* of all
 The scripture Love reads to me, loud or low."
 That self same voice, which had dispelled the fear 19
 The sudden dazzlement had caused in me,
 Again in argument engaged my thought ;
 And said: "Surely in finer sieve should'st thou 22
 This matter sift; 'tis well that thou declare
 Who to such target did direct thy bow."
 And I: "By reasons of philosophy, 25
 And by authority that hence descends,

Needs must such Love be printed upon me ;
 For Good, so far as Good, when understood, 28
 Enkindleth Love. and this so much the more,
 As more of good it in itself contains.

To th' Essence then, which by prerogative 31
 Claims as Its own all good outside Itself,
 As nothing but a ray of Its own Light,
 More than elsewhere must needs in act of love 34
 Be drawn the mind of every one who sees
 The truth, on which this demonstration rests.

Such truth to my intelligence he shows, 37
 Who demonstrates to me that Love is first
 Of all the sempiternal Substances.

Shows it again the Author of all truth 40
 In words to Moses, speaking of Himself,
 " I will my goodness unto thee reveal."

Thou show'st it too, opening in lofty words, 43
 Above all edict else, the message which
 Proclaims the mystery here to all below."

And then I heard : " By man's intelligence, 46
 And by authorities at one with it,
 Of all thy loves, thy Sovran Love is God.

But tell me yet if other cords thou feel, 49
 That draw thee to Him, and thereby declare
 With teeth how many this love grippeth thee."

The holy purpose nowise was concealed 52
 Of this, Christ's Eagle ; rather I quickly caught
 Whither he would my declaration lead.

So I resumed : " All craving stimulus, 55
 That can incite the heart to turn to God,
 Hath been concurrent to my charity.

For the world's being, and my being too, 58
 The Death, which He endured that I may live,
 And what myself and all believers hope,

These, with the living knowledge named before, 61
 Have, from the sea of a perverted love,
 Drawn me, safe landed on the shore of Right.

The fronds, wherewith the garden is all green	64
Of the Eternal Gardener, I so love,	
As what is good in them proceeds from Him."	
As I in silence ceased athwart the sky	67
Sounded a hymn most sweet; and with the rest	
My Lady sang, <i>Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.</i>	
As when beneath a piercing light sleep flies,	70
And in its glare the visual sense revives,	
As runs the brightness on from nerve to nerve,	
The awakened slumberer starts at what he sees,	73
All undiscerning, roused thus suddenly,	
Till the appraising judgment comes in aid,	
So from mine eyes all dark secretions did	76
One ray from Beatrice's eyes disperse,	
Which trailed in light more than a thousand miles;	
Whence now more clearly than before I saw;	79
And as one in bewilderment I asked,	
Who was a fourth light that I saw with us.	
My Lady then: "Within those beams in joy	82
Upon his Maker gazeth the first soul,	
That Primal Virtue ever called to life."	
Like branch of tree which bendeth its high top	85
Before the passing wind, and then erect	
In innate virtue riseth up aloft,	
E'en so what time she spake, did I myself,	88
In stupor lost; then self restored, the glow	
Of hot desire made me with freedom speak;	
And I began: "O Fruit, the only one	91
Created ripe, first Father of mankind,	
To whom each bride is daughter, and withal	
Daughter-in-law, thee I devoutly pray,	94
As best I can, to speak with me; my wish	
Thou see'st: sooner to hear I tell it not."	
Sometimes a living thing, though covered o'er,	97
By restless movement manifests its wish,	
In that the wrapper from thing wrapped takes form.	
And in such wise the first created soul,	100

- Beneath its veil made evident to me
 How glad he was to show his complaisance.
 Then breathed he forth : " That wish of thine, not yet 103
 Expressed by thee, more clearly I discern
 Than thou, whate'er to thee the clearest is.
 For in truth's Mirror I do it behold, 106
 That makes Itself Reflector of all else ;
 Though nothing is there that can It reflect.
 Thou fain would'st know how long since God placed me 109
 In the high garden, where the Lady here
 Preparèd thee to make the grand ascent ;
 And how long time I feasted there mine eyes, 112
 And the true reason of the dire disdain,
 And what the language that I used and formed.
 'Twas not the tasting of the tree, my son, 115
 That in itself caused me my long exile,
 But the transgression of the appointed mark,
 There, whence thy Lady drew Virgilius, 118
 Four thousand times, three hundred more and two
 The sun rolled round, while for these courts I yearned ;
 And him I saw return, what time on earth 121
 I was alive, through all the fires that light
 His path, nine hundred times and thirty more :
 The language that I spake was quite worn out, 124
 Or ever Nimrod and his people had
 Engaged in their impracticable work.
 For nought that human reason can effect, 127
 For ever hath endured, since man's caprice
 Is set on change, in sequence of the stars.
 A work of nature 'tis that man should speak ; 130
 But in this form or that nature leaves you
 In action free, as pleaseth you the best.
 Ere to the prison house of hell I went, 133
 JAH was on earth the name of the Chief Good,
 From Whom proceeds the Joy that swathes me round.
 But after changed to EL, so seemed it right ; 136
 For usage among men is as the leaf

On bough, which goeth and another comes.
Upon the Mount, which loftiest soars above 139
The sea, I lived, in innocence and guilt,
From the first hour to that which, as the sun
Moves from the quadrant, follows on the sixth." 142

CANTO XXVII.

*Eighth Heaven of Fixed Stars—Spirits Triumphant—
St. Peter's Denunciation of Roman Pontiffs—Woe in
Heaven—Ascent to Ninth Heaven—Hierarchy of Angels—
Primum Mobile—Celestial Beauty and Earthly Corruption.*

GLORY to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
 All Paradise began to sing, in strains
 So sweet they did my soul intoxicate.
 What I beheld appeared to me one smile 4
 Of the whole Universe, so that through eye
 And ear poured in th' inebriating joy.
 O Joy, O Gladness all ineffable! 7
 An entire Life of Love and Peacefulness!
 Riches made sure, and not a wish beyond!
 Before mine eyes the torches four remained 10
 In steadfast glow, when that, which first arrived,
 Began to brighten in more living form,
 And in its aspect such it now became, 13
 As Jupiter might well become, if he
 And Mars were birds, and plumage interchanged.
 The Providential care, which there assigns 16
 Office and order in the Blessed Choir,
 Had silence upon every side imposed;
 When now I heard: "If I my colour change, 19
 No marvel here, for as my speech proceeds,
 Thou'lt see their colour change in all of these.
 He that on earth usurpeth now my place, 22
 My place, my place I say, which vacant is
 In sight and presence of the Son of God,
 Hath of my sepulchre a sewer made 25
 Of blood and stench, wherein the Evil One,
 Who fell from here, finds satisfaction there."

- A colour such, as from sun opposite 28
 A cloud presents at evening or at morn,
 I now beheld o'er the whole heaven diffused
- And as a modest lady, who abides 31
 Safe in herself, but at another's fall,
 Only at news of it is terrified,
- So was the face of Beatrice transformed ; 34
 A like eclipse in heaven, I ween, took place,
 When the Omnipotent was crucified.
- Then he continued his deliverance 37
 In voice from its own tone so greatly changed,
 His change of countenance no greater was.
- “ Ne'er was the Spouse of Christ brought up and reared 40
 On blood of Linus, Cletus, or mine own,
 To be made use of in the quest of gold ;
- But in the quest of this most blissful life 43
 Calixtus, Pius, Sextas, Urban too,
 Much tribulation ended, shed their blood.
- Ne'er did we think that with our successors 46
 Christ's people should one part upon the right
 Be seated, and the other on the left.
- Nor that the keys, committed once to me, 49
 Should on a standard in full blazonry
 Be borne in battle 'gainst baptizèd men ;
- Nor that my likeness should imprint its seal 52
 On venal and mendacious privilege,
 Whereat I redden oft in flashing fire.
- From here rapacious wolves in shepherd's garb 55
 Are rav'ning seen o'er all the pasturage.
 God, our defence ! in slumber wherefore lie ?
- Gascons and Caorsines their tables spread 58
 To banquet on our blood ; to end how vile,
 Must thou O good beginning, come at last !
- But the high Providence, that saved to Rome 61
 By Scipio's arms the glory of the world,
 Will, as I judge, a speedy succour bring.
- And thou, my son, who in thy weight of flesh 64

Wilt yet return below, open thy mouth,
 And hide not there, what I hide not from thee."

Just as our lower atmosphere sends down 67
 Its flakes of frozen vapour, when the horn
 Of Goat celestial by the Sun is touched,
 So did I see on high the other decked ; 70
 And, thick as snowflakes, in their triumph rise
 The hosts, that with us there had sojournèd.

My eyes were following their semblances, 73
 And followed, till the intervenient space,
 Too far extended, barred remoter view.

Whereon my Lady, who saw me relieved 76
 From upward gaze, said unto me : " Bend down
 Thy looks, and note the compass thou hast fetched."

I saw that since the hour I first looked down, 79
 I had from centre to the edge moved on
 O'er all the arc which the first climate forms ;

So that past Gades I there tracked the course 82
 Of mad Ulysses, and here almost the shore,
 O'er which Eùropa, a sweet burthern, passed.

And more had I discovered of the site 85
 Of this our threshing floor, but 'neath my feet
 The sun went on, a sign and more removed.

My soul, love's bondman, which aye wooingly 88
 Waits on my Lady, ne'er, as now, desired
 With ardent eyes to see her once again.

And if a feast nature or art would spread 91
 In human form or in its counterfeit,
 To catch the mind by capturing the eye,

All this together would as nothing seem, 94
 Beside the heavenly joy, which shone on me,
 When to her face, I turned, that beamed with smiles.

The virtue, which a glance of her's vouchsafed, 97
 From the fair nest of Leda tore me off,
 And to the swiftest heaven transported me.

In every part sublime, replete with life, 100
 'Tis all so uniform that I cannot

- Say what place Beatrice there chose for me.
 But she, observant of my keen desire, 103
 Began, in smiles of gladsomeness so great,
 That in her face God's own joy seemed revealed :
 " Here the world's system, which its centre keeps 106
 Unmoved, while round it all things else revolve,
 As from its starting point, begins its course.
 Nor is this heaven enclosed in other space 109
 Than God's own mind, wherein the Love takes fire
 That moves it, and the Power it raineth down.
 A ring of light and love embraces it, 112
 As it the other spheres; and this precinct,
 He, who encircles it, alone directs.
 None else than He its motion regulates, 115
 But others all by it their measure take,
 As ten is measured by its half and fifth.
 And how in such a vessel time doth fix 118
 Its roots, and in the others show its leaves,
 May well henceforth to thee be manifest.
 O lust of greed, that sinkest men so deep 121
 Beneath thy waves, that none the power retains
 From out thy waters to lift up his eyes !
 Fair blossom in their wishes men display, 124
 But rain continuous doth oft reduce
 To shrivelled sles the veritable plum.
 In little children only can we find 127
 True faith and innocence ; and by and by
 Will both take flight, ere down on chin appears ;
 One, who still lispig, had begun to fast, 130
 His tongue now loosened, later on devours
 Food of all kind, regardless of the moon ;
 Another lispig too, loves and obeys 133
 The mother, whom, his speech now fully formed,
 He longs soon after in her grave to see.
 Thus from the whiteness of its first aspect 136
 The skin turns dark of the fair child of him,
 Who ushers in the morn, and leaves us night.

And that this may no wonder stir in thee, 139
Think how on earth there's none to govern now,
And so the human race goeth astray.

But ere from winter January hath slipped, 142
By the neglected hundredth down below,

These spheres above will with a roar proclaim
The good time come, long waited for, that shall 145

Whirl round the poops to where now point the prows,
So that the fleet shall run its course ahead,
And true fruit follow as the blossom dies. 148

CANTO XXVIII.

*The Ninth Heaven of Crystal—Hierarchy of Angels—
The Divine Essence and the orders of Angels—Harmony of
Heavenly System with the orders of the Nine Circles—
The Heavenly Hierarchy.*

AFTER in contrast with the present life
 Of wretched mortals She'd set forth the truth,
 Who of my mind a paradise creates,
 As in a mirror one may see the flame 4
 Of torch that has been lighted at his back,
 Ere of itself he hath or sight or thought,
 And round he turns to see if in good sooth 7
 The glass tells true, and finds between the two
 Accord complete as that 'tween song and note,
 E'en so my memory recalls to me 10
 That this did I, when the fair eyes I saw,
 From which Love twined the cord to capture me.
 And as I turned me round, and mine were caught 13
 By what that orb's rotation manifests,
 Oft as its wheeling is with rev'rence viewed,
 A point I saw of radiating light 16
 So dazzling, that the eye it flashes on,
 Must needs close up 'neath its intensity ;
 And star that looks the smallest here to us 19
 Would seem a very moon, if set by it,
 As one star by another star is set.
 Near as perhaps the halo which we see 22
 In cincture round the light that colours it,
 When thick the vapour hangs, wherein 'tis formed,
 No farther from this point a ring of fire 25
 So rapidly revolved, it had outstripped
 What motion swiftest girds the universe ;
 And by another this was compassed round, 28

This by a third, the third again by fourth,
 By fifth the fourth, and then by sixth the fifth.
 Beyond ensued the seventh, so far outspread' 31
 In breadth of scope, that Juno's messenger
 Complete had failed to comprehend its span.
 Likewise the eighth and ninth ; and each of them 34
 More slowly moved, according as each was
 In order farther distant from the One.
 And of them all that gave the clearest light, 37
 Which from the pure spark was the least removed,
 Because I trow, plunged deepest in its Truth.
 My Lady, who observed the anxious strain 40
 Of my suspense, said then : " From yonder point
 Hangs heaven itself and nature aggregate.
 Note well the circle with it close conjoined, 43
 And know that it its rapid motion finds
 In th' ardent fire of Love that speeds it on."
 And I : " Were the whole world in order thus 46
 Disposed, as here I see among these wheels,
 Arrangement such would leave me satisfied.
 But in the world of sense we all can see 49
 The orbs are of diviner excellence,
 As from the centre farther they recede.
 Wherefore if wish of mine be rightly met, 52
 Here in this Angel-shrine most wonderful,
 Which knows no confines but of light and love,
 I fain would know why the example there 55
 In mode agrees not with the exemplar here,
 For upon this I meditate in vain."
 " If thy own fingers to untie this knot 58
 All insufficient be, no marvel 'tis ;
 For left unhandled, it hath grown thus hard."
 My Lady thus ; then she resumed : " Accept, 61
 An thou'dst be satisfied, all I shall say,
 And to my words apply thy subt'lest wit.
 The orbs material widen and contract, 64
 As with the virtue more or less endowed,

- Which spreads itself in them through all their parts. 67
 Greater perfection greater weal effects ;
 And greater weal in greater body dwells,
 If all its parts are equally complete.
- This circle then, which with itself sweeps on 70
 The entire universe, doth correspond
 Unto the sphere which loving most, most knows.
- Wherefore if to the virtue, not the form, 73
 Of the surrounding substances that in
 Their circles stand, thou bring thy measuring line,
 A marvellous proportion thou wilt see 76
 Of more to greater, and to smaller less,
 In every heaven, with its Intelligence.”
- As all resplendent and serene remains 79
 The hemisphere of air, when Boreas blows
 Forth from the cheek, which gentler breeze exhales,
 Because the haze is cleared and melts away, 82
 That erewhile blurred it, and the heavens smile
 With all the beauties of their retinue,
- E'en such was I, soon as my Lady had 85
 Provided me with a response so clear ;
 And like a star in heaven the truth was seen.
- And as her words now to an ending came, 88
 Not otherwise doth molten iron emit
 Its sparks, than did those circles scintillate.
- The sparks in sequence of the initial fire 91
 In thousands multiplied in numbers more
 Than doubled squares on chess board ever told.
- I heard Hosannas ring from choir to choir, 94
 Praising the One Point, which their “ *Ubi* ” sets,
 And will for ever hold them as of old.
- And she, who saw my thoughts perplexed in doubt 97
 Within me, said : “ The circles first in rank
 Reveal the Seraphim and Cherubim.
- At this great speed, drawn by their cords, they haste 100
 Like the One Point to grow as most they can,
 And so much can they, as their vision mounts.

- Those other Loves that around them revolve, 103
 Are styled the Thrones of the Divine Aspect,
 For the first Triad was with them complete.
 And thou should'st know that all find their delight 106
 Proportioned as their vision penetrates
 The Truth, where all intelligence finds rest
 Hence may be seen how their Beatitude 109
 Hath its foundation in the act of Sight,
 Not in the act of Love, which follows next.
 The measure of the Sight is the reward, 112
 Which is the child of Grace and a Good will ;
 And progress thus from grade to grade proceeds.
 The second Triad, which in such wise here 115
 Buds and sprouts forth in this eternal spring,
 That Aries by night may ne'er despoil,
 Untouched by winter, sings Hosanna aye 118
 In threefold melody, that sounds in three
 Orders of joy, wherein it triplicates.
 A God-like Three this hierarchy hold ; 121
 Dominions first, the Virtues after them ;
 The Powers in order this Triad complete.
 Archangels then and Principalities 124
 In twofold dance revolve, the last save one ;
 The last is wholly for the Angels' mirth.
 These Orders all look upward with fixed gaze, 127
 And downward so prevail, that unto God
 Themselves attracted, they attract all else.
 And Dionysius once with fervent will 130
 To contemplate these orders so applied,
 That he arranged and named them, as have I.
 Other division Gregory after made ; 133
 But such, that soon as opened were his eyes
 Within this heaven, at himself he laughed.
 And if the secret of such Truth by man 136
 On earth was published, marvel not, for he
 Who taught him this, himself had seen it here,
 And of these circles much more truth beside. 139

CANTO XXIX.

*Ninth Heaven of Crystal—Angel Harmonies—Theory of
Angels—Sermon against Foolish Preachers.*

WHEN the two children of Latona both,
 One by the Ram o'erhung, one by the Scales,
 In the horizon make a common zone,
 Brief as the moment, while the Zenith holds 4
 Them both in equipoise, till from that belt
 They change their hemisphere and balance shift,
 So long the space, her features bright with smiles, 7
 That Beatrice in silence paused, her gaze
 Fixed on the Point, which me had overcome.
 Then she began: "I tell, I do not ask, 10
 What thou wouldst hear, for There I've seen it all,
 Where each *ubi* and every *quando* meet.
 Not for increase of Good unto Himself, 13
 That could not be, but that His Splendour might
 In its resplendency declare "I Am ;"
 In His Eternity outside of time, 16
 Outside all limit else, as pleasèd Him,
 Into new Loves Eternal Love spread forth.
 Not that before did He in torpor lie ; 19
 For not afore or after o'er the face
 Of the dark waters was God's going forth.
 Essence and matter, simple and combined, 22
 Issued in act, complete without a flaw,
 As arrows three from bow of triple strings :
 And as on amber, crystal or on glass 25
 A ray so shines, that 'tween its first contact
 And full diffusion interval is none,
 So the threefold effect flashed forth into 28
 Existence from its Father all at once,

Without distinction of progressive acts.
 Of all the substances was order part, 31
 Constituent and concreate ; but whom
 Pure act produced, crown of the world were they ;
 The lowest mere potentiality ; 34
 'Tween these, potentiality and act
 Were joined by bond that never is unbound.
 Jerome hath written you about Angels, 37
 That they created were long centuries,
 Or ever yet the other world was made ;
 But truth hereon on many pages is 40
 Set down by writers of the Holy Ghost,
 As thou wilt see, if carefully thou look ;
 And reason too in measure this perceives ; 43
 For it would not allow that motors such
 Should wait so long ere perfecting their end.
 Thou knowest now both where and when these Loves 46
 Created were, and how ; so that three fires
 Of thy desire are quenched now in thee.
 Nor could one, as he counts, to twenty come 49
 So speedily, as of the Angels some
 Disturbed the basis of your elements :
 The rest stood firm, and action such began, 52
 As here thou seest ; and with such delight,
 That never from their circuits they diverge.
 The first beginning of the fall was caused 55
 By cursèd pride of him, whom thou didst see
 Compressed beneath the weight of the whole world.
 Those whom thou seest here, with modesty 58
 Confessed themselves children of Goodness, Who
 Thus prompt had made them in intelligence ;
 Therefore in them was visual force enhanced 61
 With Light of Grace to their own merit joined,
 So that they have a full and steadfast will.
 I would not have thee doubt, rather assured, 64
 That there is merit in receiving Grace,
 According as affection welcomes it.

- And now concerning this consistory, 67
 Much may'st thou contemplate, if once my words
 Are garnered well, without another's help.
 But inasmuch as in your schools on earth 70
 'Tis taught of Angels that their nature is
 Such, that they hear and recollect and will,
 I will still speak, so may'st thou simply see 73
 The Truth, which men below sophisticate
 By words equivocal in lecturing thus.
 These substances, since happy first in sight 76
 Of God's own Face, have never turned their gaze
 From That, wherefrom can nothing be concealed.
 Their vision cannot intercepted be 79
 By any new object, and thus no need
 Of memory, as though a thought were lost.
 So that down there men dream, tho' not asleep, 82
 Believing some, some not, their dream speaks true ;
 But with the last is greater fault and shame.
 Below you tread not in one single path 85
 As you philosophize, but are borne off
 By love of vain display and thoughts of it.
 Yet even this is here above endured 88
 With less disdain, than when God's written word
 Is set aside or twisted to abuse.
 Men think not there what blood it cost to spread 91
 This seed abroad, nor how well pleasing is
 The man, who humbly stands closest by it.
 To make a show each racks his wit, and seeks 94
 Inventions of his own, and preachers dwell
 On these, and leave the Gospel tale untold ;
 One tells us that the moon turned back her course 97
 In the Christ's Passion, and so interposed
 That the sun's light fell not upon the earth ;
 And others, that this light withdrew itself : 100
 And thus to Spaniards and to Indians,
 As to the Jews th' eclipse was uniform.
 Lapi and Bendi are in Florence not 103

- As numerous, as like fables, year by year
 Shouted aloud in pulpits on all sides.
- So the poor sheep, left in their ignorance 106
 Come home from pasture fed on wind alone,
 Yet not excused for seeing not their loss.
- Christ said not to His college at the first: 109
 Go forth, and to the world preach idle tales,
 But gave them the Foundation of the Truth ;
- And from their mouths so went this sound alone, 112
 That as they fought to light the fires of Faith,
 They made the Gospel both their shield and spear.
- But men go now with quibble and with jest 115
 To preach, and can they only raise a laugh,
 The hood is swollen, and they ask no more.
- But in its lappet nestles there a bird, 118
 Which if the vulgar saw, they'd see the worth
 Of pardons they so confidently trust,
- Whereby such folly hath grown up on earth, 121
 That without proof of any evidence
 To any promise people give assent.
- Thus does the pig of Anthony grow fat : 124
 And others too, more swinish much themselves,
 Paying in coin that lacks the current stamp.
- But long enough have we digressed : so now 127
 Turn thine eyes back to the straight way again,
 So may our road grow shorter with our time.
- This nature here in number multiplies 130
 So high, that never was there form of speech,
 Or thought in men, that could its sum attain.
- And if you look at that which is revealed 133
 By Daniel, in his thousands thou wilt see,
 That a determined number there lies hid.
- The Primal Light, which shines upon all these, 136
 By them in modes as many is received,
 As are the splendours, wherewith It unites ;
- And thence, just as upon conceptive act 139
 Affection follows, so in modes diverse,

Fervid or cooler, doth Love's sweetness glow.
See now th' exceeding height, and see the breadth 142
Of the Eternal Worth, which mirrors made
So many, wherein 'tis distributed,
Remaining as before One in Itself." 145

CANTO XXX.

*The Empyrean—God—The Angels and the Saints.
Ascent to the Empyrean. The River of Light—The Rose
of the Blessed—The Throne of Henry the Seventh.*

PERCHANCE six thousand miles from us noontide
 Is blazing, and this world e'en now inclines
 Its shadow almost to the level plane,
 When the mid vault of heaven, profound above, 4
 'Gins to show such that here and there a star
 Is lost to vision at our depth below ;
 And as the brightest handmaid of the sun 7
 Yet nearer comes, the sky shuts out from view
 Stars in succession, till the fairest pales ;
 Not otherwise that Triumph, which disports 10
 Itself around the Point that o'erwhelmed me,
 Seeming contained in what Itself contains,
 Little by little faded from my sight, 13
 Whereat the blank, and love's own impulse then,
 Constrained mine eyes to turn to Beatrice.
 If all that thus far hath been said of her, 16
 Were now compressed into one eulogy,
 'Twould serve but little for the present turn.
 The beauty I beheld so far transcends 19
 All measure known to us, that sure I am
 Only her Maker can enjoy it all.
 Vanquished at this point I confess myself, 22
 More than himself o'er-master'd by his theme
 Tragic or Comic Poet ever found ;
 For as the sun dazzles unsteady sight, 25
 So the remembrance of her gracious smile
 Blots out the power of memory itself.
 From the first day on which I saw her face 28

- In life below up to its vision now,
 The sequence of my verse hath not been checked.
 But sequence such, as Poet, henceforth I 31
 Must leave, far, far behind her loveliness,
 As every artist at the last is foiled.
 Such, as I leave her waiting an award 34
 Far nobler than my trumpet can proclaim,
 Which to a close now draws its arduous theme,
 With voice and gesture of a ready guide, 37
 'Gan she: "We from the greatest sphere emerge,
 And reach the Heaven that is pure Light alone,
 Light intellectual, replete with Love; 40
 Love of true Good itself, replete with joy;
 Joy that transcends all sweetness of delight.
 Here wilt thou see arrayed the armies twain 43
 Of Paradise, and one of them in form,
 That on the Judgment Day thou'lt see again."
 Like to a sudden flash that shattereth 46
 The powers of vision, when upon the eye
 The strongest objects leave their image blank,
 Round me likewise a living splendour shone, 49
 That left me blindfold, swathed in such a veil
 Of its own glow, that nothing else appeared.
 "Aye doth the Love, that holds this Heaven in calm, 52
 With salutation such its welcome give,
 So to adapt the taper to its flame."
 No sooner in mine ear had these brief words 55
 Their entrance made, than I perceived myself
 Upraised beyond all forces of my own;
 New sense of sight within me had caught fire, 58
 Such, that no light there is however pure
 Mine eyes would not have then been proof against.
 And like a river I beheld a light, 61
 Refulgent in its flow between two banks,
 Decked with the blossoms of a wondrous spring.
 Forth from its flood there issued living sparks, 64
 Which all around commingled with the flowers,

Like rubies set in circumscribing gold.
 Then as inebriate with the sweet perfumes, 67
 Into the wondrous flood they plunged again ;
 And as one sank, issued another forth.
 "The high desire, which burns and spurs thee now 70
 Fully to understand what thou dost see,
 Pleaseth the more, the more intense it is.
 But of this water thou perforce must drink, 73
 Ere thirst so great in thee is satisfied."
 So spake to me the Sunshine of my eyes :
 Yet added she : "This stream, these topazes 76
 Which come and go, this smiling of the grass
 Are but in shadow preludes of their truth.
 Not that these things are austere in themselves ; 79
 But the defect is on thy side alone,
 Whose vision hath not yet attained such heights."
 With prompter movement ne'er doth infant turn 82
 Its face to fount of milk, when it awakes
 Some day long time after the wonted hour,
 Than I to make a better mirror of 85
 Mine eyes, as o'er the wave I bent, the which
 Flows only for the betterment of life.
 No sooner with but eyelid fringe had I 88
 Drunk of the stream, than it at once appeared
 Changed into roundness from a lengthened line.
 Then as the folk, who have been wearing masks, 91
 Change their appearance when they cast away
 The form assumed, wherein they were concealed,
 So to yet higher festival did change 94
 For me the flowers and sparkles, that I saw
 Both courts of heaven in them made manifest.
 O splendour of our God, whereby I saw 97
 The reign triumphant of exalted Truth !
 Grant me the power to tell how it I saw.
 A Light above makes the Creator's Self 100
 To creature visible who, seeing Him,
 In sight of Him Alone findeth full peace ;

- And circle-wise itself it so expands 103
 In form, that its circumference would be
 A cincture far too wide to gird the sun.
- All that is seen of it is as a ray 106
 Reflected on the *Primum Mobile*,
 That draweth thence its life and potency.
- And as a hill in water at its base 109
 Mirrors itself, as if to see its charms,
 When richest in its verdure and its flowers,
- So 'bove the light o'erhead and all around, 112
 Mirror'd in more than thousand ranks I saw
 All who above from us have there returned.
- And if the lowest step collect on it 115
 So vast a light, what must the expanse be
 Of this rose to its utmost petals spread.
- My vision nor in sweep, nor yet in height 118
 Did lose itself, but to the full took in
 That joy, in quality and quantity :
- There near nor far nor adds nor takes away : 121
 For where God rules immediately Himself,
 No law of Nature there is relevant.
- Into the yellow of the Eternal Rose, 124
 Which spreads, mounts up, and in perfume exhales
 Praise to the Sun that cheers perpetual Spring,
- As one in silence, yet who longs to speak, 127
 Me Beatrice led on, and said: "Observe
 How vast the concourse of the white-robed throng!
- Our City see, how great its circuit round! 130
 See too the multitudes that fill our ranks,
 So that for but few more is place reserved.
- In that proud chair whereon thy gaze is fixed, 133
 By reason of the crown e'en now placed there,
 Ere yet thyself sup at this marriage feast,
- Great Harry's soul will sit, who shall on earth 136
 Th' imperial title bear, and Italy
 Redress, ere she with welcome is prepared.
- The blind cupidity, that casts its spell on you 139

Below, hath made you like the little child,
Dying of hunger, that repels the nurse ;
And in the Sacred Court a President 142
Will sit, who overtly or covertly
Will not walk with him on the road he takes.
Yet but a little while, and God will not 145
Endure his sacred office, but will thrust
Him down, where Simon Magus earned his place,
And deeper still will sink the Anagnese." 148

CANTO XXXI.

*The Empyrean—God—The Angels and the Blest—The
White Rose and the Angel Bees—S. Bernard—Prayer to
Beatrice—The Glory of B.V.M.*

IN form then of a white and glistening Rose
 The army of the Saints displayed itself,
 Which in His own Blood Christ Himself espoused.
 The other, which on wing beholds and sings 4
 His Glory, Who enamours all of them,
 And His Goodness, which thus exalted them,
 E'en as a swarm of bees, that cluster now 7
 Upon the flowers, and anon return,
 Where honied sweetness is their toil's reward,
 On the great flower alighted, that bedecks 10
 Itself with many leaves, and thence again
 Rose to the place, where aye their Love abides.
 Their faces glowed all with a living flame, 13
 Their wings were gold, and all the rest so white,
 Not e'en may snow to such a point attain.
 Alighting on the flower, from rank to rank, 16
 They shed abroad the peace and burning love,
 Which, as they fanned their sides, themselves acquired.
 And this intrusion 'twixt the flower and Him 19
 Oh High of all this wingèd plenitude
 Nowise the vision nor its splendour dimmed.
 For Light Divine throughout the universe 22
 Reacheth to each in measure of its worth;
 So nothing is there that can It obstruct.
 This Kingdom free from care and full of joy, 25
 Peopled by throngs of ancient days and new,

- Fixed on one Point its gaze and all its love.
 O Threefold Light, that, in One single Star 28
 Shining upon their sight, contentest them,
 Cast Thy bright beams upon our storms below.
 If e'er barbarians coming from the land 31
 Which Helicè day after day o'erhangs,
 Revolving ever with her darling son,
 At sight of Rome and all her mighty works, 34
 Paused in amazement, as the Lateran
 Rose towering 'bove all other things of men ;
 I, who from human things to things divine 37
 Had come, into Eternity from time,
 Ay, from Firenze to the Just and Wise,
 With what amazement must I have been filled ! 40
 In sooth, between it and the joy I felt,
 I had no mind to hear, and self was dumb.
 And as a pilgrim finds himself refreshed, 43
 While he surveys the temple of his vow,
 And hopes one day to tell how fair it stood,
 So traversing the line of living Light, 46
 I ran my eye along the tiers of steps,
 Now up, now down, now making the whole round.
 Faces I saw persuasive to dear love, 49
 Graced in Another's light, with their own smile,
 Each movement with all dignity adorned.
 The form in general of Paradise 52
 My survey now had fully taken in ;
 Sight not yet fixed on any special point ;
 And to my Lady I turned round with wish 55
 Re-kindled to inquire from her of things,
 Whereon my mind was hanging in suspense.
 One thing I sought ; another took its place. 58
 'Twas Beatrice I thought to see, and saw
 An old man clothed in glory like the Saints.
 Over his eyes and cheeks there was suffused 61
 A kindly joy and air of sympathy,
 Such as a tender father well becomes.

- And, "She, where is she?" I enquired in haste. 64
 Then he: "This thy desire to satisfy,
 Did Beatrice remove me from my place ;
 And if you look to circle, now third from 67
 The highest grade, her thou wilt see again,
 Upon the throne her merits have assigned."
 Without reply upward I raised mine eyes, 70
 And saw her fashion for herself a crown
 In the Eternal rays that she flashed back.
 From highest peak where thunder roll is heard, 73
 The mortal eye, that's lost in lowest depth
 Of sea, is not in distance so remote,
 As I was there with Beatrice in view : 76
 But this was nothing ; for her image came
 Down to me straight, no medium interposed.
 "Lady, in whom my hope expands in bloom, 79
 Who didst for my salvation condescend
 To leave the traces of thy steps in hell,
 In all the wondrous things that I have seen, 82
 I recognize their grace and influence
 By thy great bounty and prerogative.
 Me, a bonds slave, thou'st drawn to liberty 85
 By every path, and all the methods that
 Thou had'st for this end due authority.
 Gift so magnificent keep safe in me, 88
 So that my soul which thou hast healed, may be
 Loosed from the body, as thou'dst have it pass."
 So did I pray ; and she so far away, 91
 It seemed me thus, looked down on me and smiled ;
 Then to the eternal Fount she turned again.
 And the old Saint : "That thou accomplish now 94
 Thy journey to its goal," such were his words,
 "For which a holy love and prayer sent me,
 Over this garden cast a flying glance ; 97
 In seeing it thy sight will fitter grow
 To mount still higher through the ray Divine ;
 And heaven's own Queen, from whom proceeds the love, 100

That burns in me, will pour all grace on us ;
 For I am Bernard, her own faithful son."
 As one, who from Croatia, it may be, 103
 Our *Vera Icon* comes to contemplate,
 Not satisfied to hear the ancient tale,
 Says in his thought, while 'tis to view exposed, 106
 " My Lord, Christ Jesus, Very God indeed,
 And is it thus Thy semblance once appeared ? "
 Such was myself, as on the living love 109
 I gazed of him, who in this world below
 In contemplation found the peace of that.
 " O Son of Grace, this glad estate of ours " 112
 So he began : " will ne'er be known to thee
 If thine eyes tarry only at its base.
 But mark these circles to their farthest range, 115
 Till seated on her throne thou see the Queen,
 To whom this realm devout subjection makes."
 I raised mine eyes ; and as in early morn 118
 We see the horizon on the eastern side
 Outshining that whereon the sun declines,
 So, as from vale rising to mountain top, 121
 With eyes uplift, I saw a part far off
 Surpass in brightness all the rest in front.
 And as where we await the Car, so ill 124
 By Phaeton steered, a fiery redness glows,
 While to the right and left light shows more faint,
 So in the centre did the Oriflamme 127
 Beam forth in peaceful glow, and on each side
 In equal measure tempering its flame.
 And at that centre with their wings outspread 130
 Thousands of Angels jubilant I saw
 In splendour and in movement each distinct.
 There at those sportive motions and those songs 133
 A Smile of Beauty I beheld, which was
 In eyes of all the other Saints their joy.
 And if of words I had as great a wealth 136
 As of imagining, I would not dare

'Tempt the least part of Her delightsomeness.
When Bernard saw mine eyes intent and fixed 139
On Her, Whose glow fired his own glowing warmth,
His too he turned to Her so lovingly
That mine in fonder yearning gazed again. 142

CANTO XXXII.

*The Empyrean—GOD—The Angels and the Blest—The
Assembly of the Celestial Rose—The Innocents—Mary and
Gabriel—The High Patricians of the New Jerusalem.*

ABSORBED in joy, that meditative saint
 The teacher's office freely undertook,
 And with these holy words he thus began :
 " The Wound, that Mary closed and dressed with oil, 4
 She, who now sits in beauty at her feet,
 Is she, who ope'd it first, and drove it deep.
 There in the order, which the third row marks, 7
 Sits Rachel, placed directly under her,
 With Beatrice beside her, as thou seest.
 Sarah, Rebekah, Judith, and her too, 10
 Ancestress of the Songman, who in grief
 For sin his *Miserere mei* sang,
 These thou canst see, as thus from tier to tier 13
 They sink, and with the name of each I pass
 Adown the Rose o'er its successive leaves.
 And from the seventh stage down, as from the first 16
 To it, come Hebrew women in a line,
 Dividing thus the petals of the flower ;
 Because accordant with the view their faith 19
 Gave them of Christ, they form the wall by which
 Partition down the sacred stair is made.
 On this side, where the flower is seen complete 22
 In fulness of its leaves, are seated they,
 Who in a Christ believed that was to come.
 The semicircles on the other side, 25
 By vacant spaces interrupted, hold
 Them, whose eyes turned to Christ, already come.
 And as on this side the most glorious throne 28

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 The semicircles on the other side, 25
 By vacant spaces interrupted, hold
 Them, whose eyes turned to Christ, already come.
 And as on this side the most glorious throne 28

Of Heaven's high Queen, and all the other stools
 Beneath her feet, a grand division form,
 So opposite stands that of the great John, 31
 Who, ever Saint, endured the wilderness,
 And martyrdom, and then two years in hell ;
 And below him, placed in allotted line 34
 Augustine, Benedict and Francis sit,
 With others down to here round after round.
 Now mark the depth of Providence Divine, 37
 That one and other aspect of the Faith
 Shall in equality this garden fill ;
 And know that lower than the halfway step 40
 Which strikes across the separating lines,
 None are there placed by merit of their own,
 But by Another's on conditions fixed. 43
 For these are spirits that were all released,
 Ere they had made the true choice for themselves.
 This by their faces thou canst well discern, 46
 No less than by their tones of childish voice,
 If well thou look and listen to them well.
 Thou doubtst still, and doubting, silent art : 49
 But I will loose for thee these knotted bonds,
 Wherein thy subtle searchings hold thee fast.
 Within the amplitude of this wide realm 52
 No casual point can ever have a place,
 No more than sorrow, thirst or hunger can :
 For by Eternal Law, whate'er thou seest, 55
 Establish'd is, so that precisely here,
 As ring to finger all things correspond.
 Wherefore the little folk, thus hurried off 58
 To true life, are *non sine causâ* here ;
 Among themselves more and less excellent.
 The King, through Whom this kingdom rests in peace, 61
 Amid such love and manifold delight
 No will hath ever dared to wish for more,
 Creating in His own glad Presence all 64
 Men's souls, as pleaseth Him, with grace endows

- Them differently : let th' effect suffice.
 And clearly and expressly this is shown 67
 In Holy Scripture's story of the twins,
 To anger roused e'en in their mother's womb.
 And thus, as in the colour of their hair, 70
 So in grace too, the Light most High, as Him
 Seems best, doth worthily their crown adorn.
 Without desert of their own character 73
 Are these then ranged in various degrees,
 Differing alone in force of primal sight.
 Sufficed it in the earliest times to win 76
 Salvation, that with innocence conjoined,
 The faith of parents only should appear.
 After the earlier days had been fulfilled, 79
 To give due strength unto the wings of innocence,
 It was required that males be circumcised.
 But after that the day of Grace arrived, 82
 Lacking the perfect Baptism of Christ,
 Such innocence was left in ward below.
 And now regard the Face, which unto Christ 85
 Is the most like, for glory such as Its
 Alone enables thee to look on Christ."
 Upon Her I beheld such gladsomeness 88
 Rain down in showers, borne by the holy Minds,
 Created through those heights to fly abroad,
 That whatsoever I had seen before, 91
 Ne'er thus detained me in amazed suspense,
 Nor such resemblance showed to me of God.
 And that same Love, which came to Her below, 94
 Singing, *Ave Maria gratia plena*,
 There in Her presence spreads his wings abroad.
 To this divine anthem response arose 97
 From every part of the Assembly Blest,
 And a serener calm possessed each face.
 "O Saintly Father, Who for my sake art 100
 Contented here in absence from the spot,
 Where by decree eternal is thy seat,

- What is that Angel, that thus jubilant : 103
 Gazeth into the eyes of our great Queen,
 Enamoured so, he seems like glowing fire? ”
 Thus to his teaching I again repaired, 106
 Who stood in Mary’s beauty glorified,
 Like morning star before the rising sun.
 And he : “ What confidence and playfulness 109
 Is possible in Angel and in Soul,
 Is all in him, and we would have it so ;
 For he it is, who carried down the palm 112
 To Mary, when the Son of God was pleased,
 The burthen of our load to undergo.
 But with thine eyes now follow me, as I 115
 In words proceed, and the Patricians note
 Of this most holy and most just empire.
 Those two seated on high, and happier still, 118
 As being nearest to the august Queen,
 Are, as it were, two main roots of this Rose ;
 He, who upon Her left approaches Her, 121
 The father is, by whose presumptuous taste
 So much of bitter tastes the human race.
 Upon Her right the ancient Father see 124
 Of Holy Church, whom Christ entrusted with
 The keys of access to this beauteous flower.
 And he, who witnessed all the grievous days 127
 Ere death came to him of the Fair Betrothed,
 That once was purchased by the Spear and Nails,
 Sits by his side : and by the other rests 130
 The Leader, under whom the thankless race,
 Fickle, backsliding, was with Manna fed.
 To Peter opposite see Anna sits, 133
 Content to gaze upon her Child, from whom
 Her eyes ne’er move throughout th’ Hosanna song.
 And opposite the father of us all 136
 Lucia sits, who did thy Lady move,
 When to thy ruin thou hadst stooped thy brow.
 But time allotted to this trance runs on ; 139

Here will we pause, as the shrewd tailor doth,
Who cuts the coat according to his cloth ;
And turn our eyes direct to Primal Love ; 142
So gazing toward Him, thou may'st penetrate,
Far as allowed, the Splendour of His Light.
But yet lest backward thou perchance should'st fall, 145
While on thine own wings thinking to advance,
Need 'tis by prayer thou win the help of Grace ;
Of Grace from Her, who able is to aid : 148
With due intention then now follow me,
That from my words thy heart turn not aside."
And he thereon began this holy prayer. 151

CANTO XXXIII.

The Empyrean—GOD—The Angels and the Blest—The Holy Prayer—S. Mary's Intercession—The Vision of GOD—The Last Ascent.

“O VIRGIN Mother, Daughter of thy Son,
 Lowly and loftier than all creature else,
 Predestined Term of Purposes Divine,
 Thyself it is, that human nature hast 4
 Ennobled so, that its Creator e'en
 Disdained not His Own Creature to become.
 Within Thy womb the fire of love revived, 7
 By warmth whereof, here in Eternal Peace
 This flower hath grown, expanding thus in bloom.
 Here art Thou unto us the noontide torch 10
 Of Charity; to mortals down below
 The living Fountain of perennial Hope.
 Lady, so great art Thou, Thy might so great, 13
 That who would grace desire, and not to Thee
 Refer his wish, would fly without a wing.
 Thine own benignity brings succour, not 16
 To him alone that asks, but oftentimes
 Doth liberally the prayer anticipate.
 In Thee are clemency and pity found; 19
 In Thee munificence; in Thee combines
 Whate'er in creature can be found of good.
 Now this man, who from lowest pit of all 22
 The Universe up to this point hath seen
 All forms of spiritual life in turn,
 To Thee entreaty makes, of grace, for strength 25
 So great, that higher yet he may towards
 Supreme Salvation dare to lift his eyes.
 And I, who ne'er burned more to see this sight 28

Myself, than now for him, present to Thee
 My every prayer, and pray they're not fruitless :
 That Thou do now from him all cloud dispel 31
 Of his mortality, that by Thy prayers
 The Joy Supreme may be to him unveiled.
 And still, O Queen, I pray, (for all Thou wilt 34
 Thou canst) that Thou in perfect soundness keep
 After such vision his affections safe.
 All human passions may thy charge subdue ; 37
 See Beatrice, and all the many Saints,
 Who with clasped hands unite to urge my suit."
 Those eyes, revered of God, and seen with love, 40
 Fixed on her suppliant, made it plain to us
 How dear to Her are prayers of the devout.
 Then to the Eternal Light they turned direct, 43
 Whereto let none suppose a creature's eye
 So pure in brightness ever wins its way.
 And as unto the Goal of all desires 46
 I nearer drew, I felt, as needs I must,
 The yearning of desire had ended too.
 Bernard gave me a sign, and smiled on me, 49
 That I should upward look, but self prompted,
 Already was I doing, what he bade ;
 Because my sight, as now it purer grew, 52
 Farther and farther pierced into that Ray
 Of Light Supreme, which in Itself is Truth.
 From now henceforward all that I beheld, 55
 No speech can tell ; it fails at such a sight ;
 And fails the mem'ry too in its excess.
 As one, who has in dream a vision seen, 58
 Retains a fixed impression of a dream,
 But nothing more to memory returns,
 Such am I now, for almost as 'twould seem, 61
 The vision fades ; yet still within my heart
 Distils the sweetness that was born of it.
 E'en thus before the sun snow breaks its seal ; 64
 Thus in the wind upon the fluttering leaves

- The Sibyl's sentence in oblivion lost.
- O Light Supreme, Thyself exalted far 67
 'Bove reach of human thought, one gleam alone
 Of what Thou didst appear, to memory lend ;
 And make my tongue so mightily prevail, 70
 That of Thy Glory at the least it may
 One sparkle leave to races yet to come ;
 For if something unto my mind return, 73
 And through these verses a faint sound be heard,
 More of thine excellence will men conceive.
 I think, if from th' intensity I felt 76
 Of Living Light, I had withdrawn mine eyes,
 Lost in amazement must I have remained.
 And I remember I the bolder was 79
 To bear so much, in that I now had joined
 My vision with the Essence Infinite.
 O Grace o'erflowing, in the strength whereof 82
 I dared to penetrate Eternal Light,
 So that its vision to the full I drank !
 In its Profundity I saw enclosed, 85
 And into one volume bound up with love,
 All that through nature is dispersed in leaves :
 Substance and accident, and all their laws 88
 Together fused, and in a mode so strange,
 That all I tell of is one simple light.
 I think I saw the universal form 91
 Of this entanglement ; for saying this,
 I feel within a more abundant joy.
 A single moment more oblivion brings, 94
 Than five and twenty ages to th' emprise
 That startled Neptune with the Argo's shade.
 Thus my soul gazed, lost in suspended thought, 97
 Rapt in attention and immovable,
 And as it gazed, gazed with intenser glow.
 In presence of this Light a man becomes 100
 Such, that to turn from It to other light,
 It is impossible he could consent :

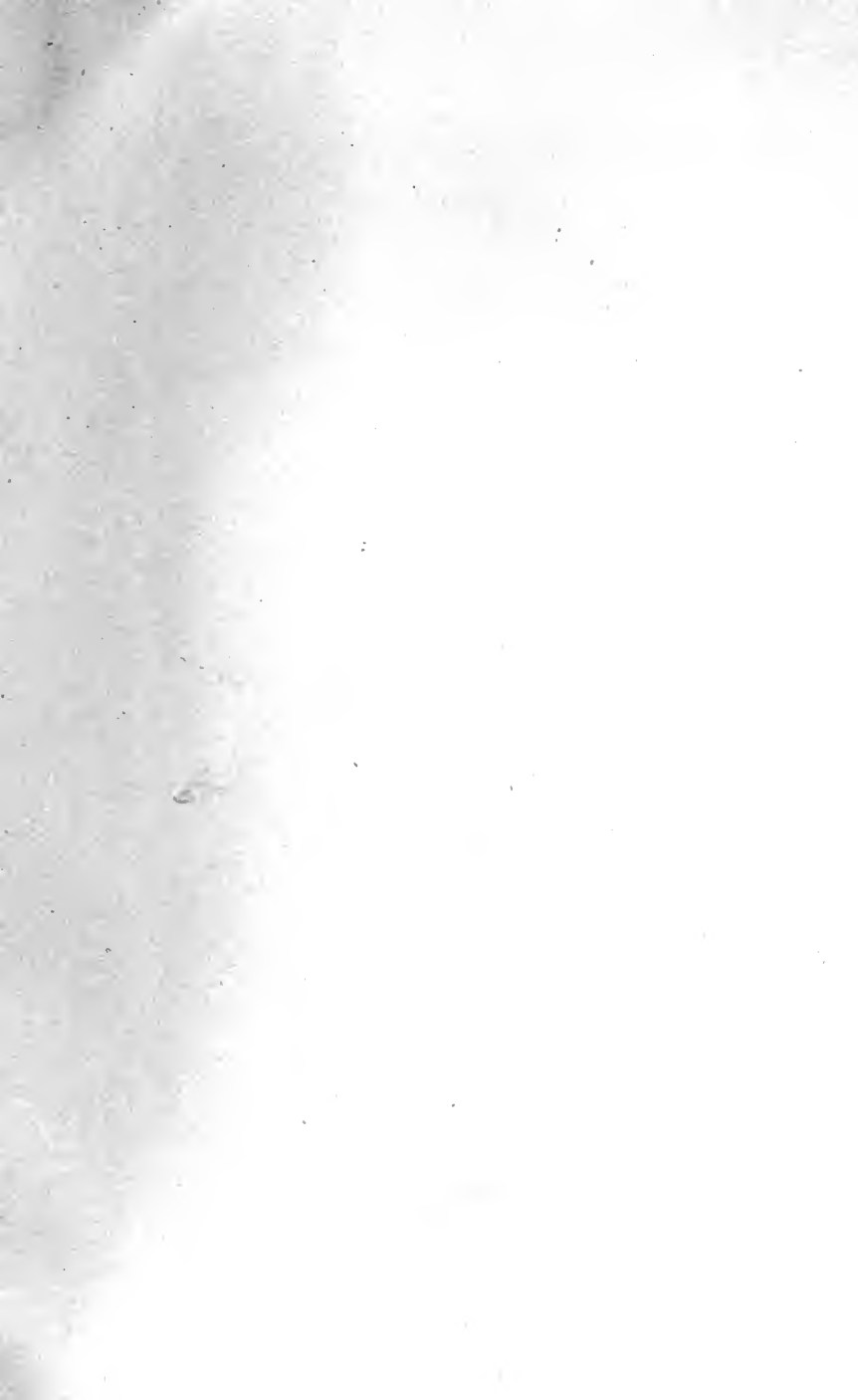
- Because the Good, Sole Object of the will 103
 Is there stored up; and outside It all is
 Defective, which in It is perfected.
- Henceforth my story will far shorter be, 106
 So far as recollection goes, than tale
 Of babe, that moistens at the breast its tongue.
- Not that more than One Semblance did appear 109
 Within the Living Light I gazed upon;
 For that is ever as It was before;
- But as my visual sense received new force, 112
 And I on One Appearance only gazed,
 Changed in myself, I thought 'twas It that changed.
- Within the Substance bright and most profound 115
 Of the exalted Light, three circles formed
 Of triple tint, but in dimension one;
- As Iris upon Iris, seemed the first 118
 Upon the next reflected, and the third
 A fire breathed equally from both of them.
- How mean my words, my utterance how weak 121
 To tell my thought, and this to grasp the sight;
 To call it little would not be enough.
- Eternal Light, Thyself Thy sole repose, 124
 Thou only know'st Thyself, and thus Self-known
 And knowing, smilest upon Self in Love.
- That circling, which, as thus conceived, appeared 127
 In Thee as a reflected Light, surveyed
 In measure by mine eyes that traced its orb,
- Within Itself, of Its own proper hue, 130
 Seemed to depict an image of our form,
 So that on it mine eyes were rivetted.
- As the geometer, who sets himself 133
 To square the circle, finding not the means,
 Broods on the principle he fails to reach,
- Such was I then at this new spectacle: 136
 I fain would see by what means did agree
 Image with circle, and how there conjoined.
- But for such flight mine were no proper wings, 139

Had it not been that on my mind there smote
A flash that with it brought the thing desired.
For such high Phantasy my powers fell short; 142
But wish and will in me already, like
A wheel that rolls in even motion on,
The same Love moved, that moves the sun and stars. 145

FOR ERRATA SEE NEXT PAGE.

ERRATA.

Page.	Line.		read the	Page.	Line.		read shaft.
15	57	for too		277	66	for shaft,	
18	144	“ Averrhoes	“ Averrhoës	280	3	“ tecta,	“ tecta
21	74	“ approach	“ approach,	280	4	“ life	“ like
28	74	“ where	“ were	281	65	“ marshalls	“ marshals
34	127	“ saw't	“ saw'st	282	73	“ flambeau	“ flambeaux
37	75	“ when	“ whence	287	100	“ car.	“ car,
43	26	“ pain	“ pain.	288	106	“ care.	“ care,
48	36	“ beon	“ been	297	67	“ paints	“ paints,
52	37	“ turnæd	“ turned	297	80	“ Elias too	“ Elias too,
56	25	“ above	“ about	302	71	“ display'd.	“ display'd,
60	5	“ them.	“ them,	302	81	“ stamped	“ stamped.
60	11	“ breath	“ breadth	311	72	“ reserve	“ reserve.
65	38	“ Guida	“ Guido	315	51	“ Makes	“ Make
67	133	“ sometime	“ sometimes	324	39	“ ascent	“ ascent.
77	55	“ contended	“ contented	332	—	“ Beneficent	“ Beneficent
82	82	“ maid	“ maid,	332	19	“ contained,	“ contained
84	3	“ height.	“ height,	334	70	“ lightning	“ lightning
93	5	“ Æsops'	“ Æsop's	339	67	“ distills	“ distils
98	15	“ the pasture	“ pasture	340	135	“ form	“ form.
103	8	“ his	“ its	344	97	“ climbs't	“ climb'st
105	95	“ Nassidius	“ Nasidius	360	112	“ brethern	“ brethren
122	61	“ worm.	“ worm,	362	50	“ course	“ course.
124	117	“ accounted	“ counted	365	145	“ company.	“ company.”
127	75	“ the the	“ the	371	(contents)	“ and	“ and
127	80	“ made	“ make	382	48	“ Where	“ Were
142	69	“ Thou	“ thou	382	65	“ Acone	“ Aconè
143	115	“ Wherefore	“ Whereou	383	66	“ Buondel-	“ Buondel-
145	2	“ Guidecea	“ Giudecca			“ montio	“ monti
164	94	“ Asking	“ asking	383	73	“ on	“ too
178	122	“ thine	“ Thine	385	153	“ lance	“ lance,
182	84	“ Invisable	“ Invisible	392	50	“ them	“ them.
183	135	“ Alessan-	“ Alessan-	393	89	“ off;	“ off
		dria	dria	398	111	“ poor	“ poor.
187	104	“ move	“ move,	401	32	“ claims,	“ claims
200	142	“ you	“ you			“ now	“ now,”
202	45	“ hast	“ hadst	412	82	“ monks	“ monks,
207	67	“ loss.	“ loss,	414	147	“ take,	“ take;
212	96	“ them	“ them.	419	29	“ fervant	“ fervent
213	132	“ come	“ came	422	129	“ thoud'st	“ thou'dst
220	28	“ apoken	“ spoken	430	67	“ ceased	“ ceased,
228	119	“ himself	“ himself,	434	30	“ diffused	“ diffused;
231	81	“ Corsica;	“ Corsica.	435	84	“ burthern	“ burthen
235	48	“ masonry,	“ masonry.	437	148	“ dies.	“ dies.”
245	51	“ shifts	“ shifts;	440	69	“ complete	“ complete.
250	93	“ years,	“ years:	441	108	“ rest	“ rest.
259	70	“ Au	“ Aud	445	124	“ assent	“ assent.
265	138	“ fit.	“ fit	454	87	“ authority	“ authority.
266	15	“ burned,	“ burned:	455	112	“ ours	“ ours,
268	99	“ love,	“ love;				









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